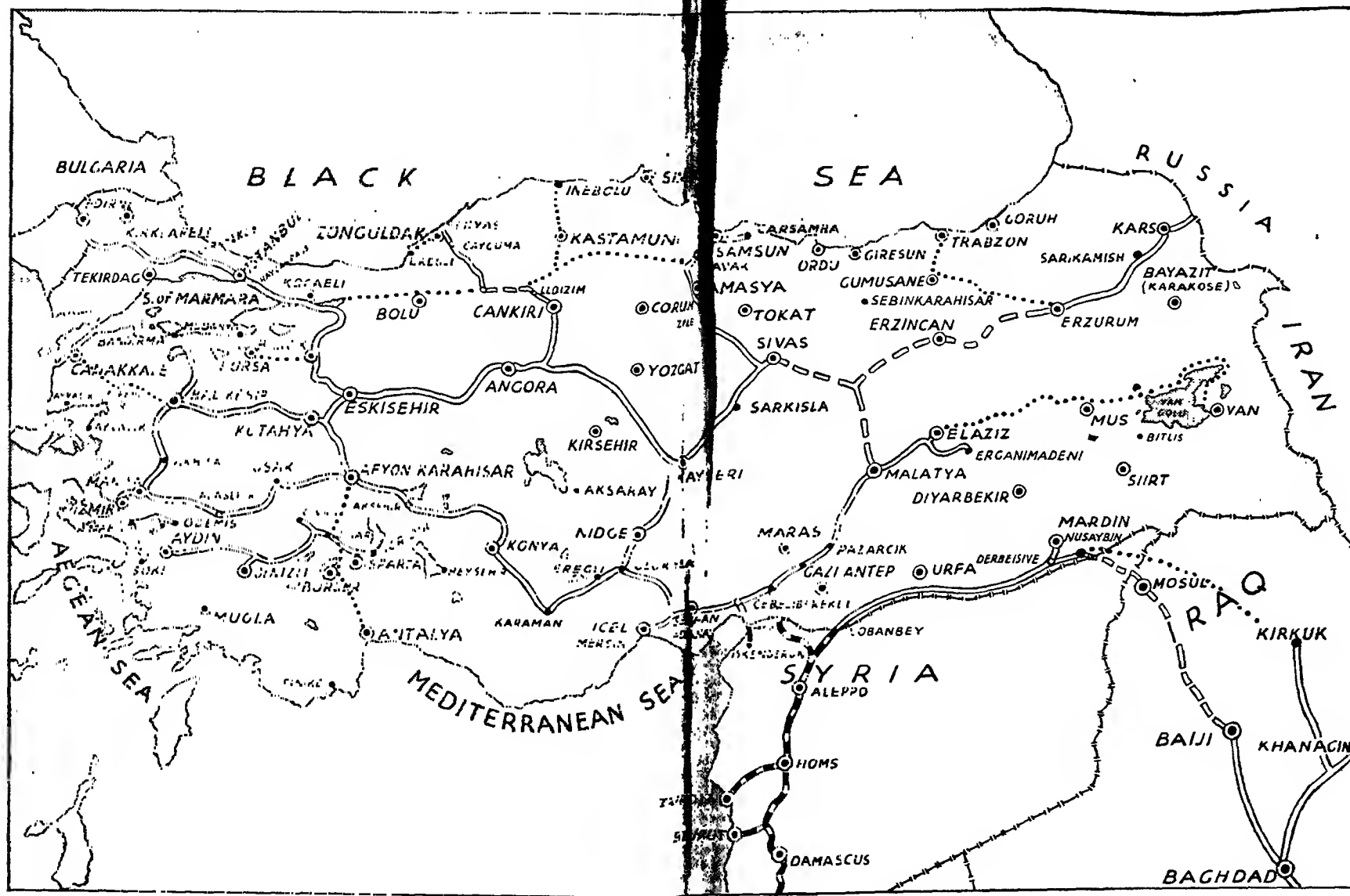


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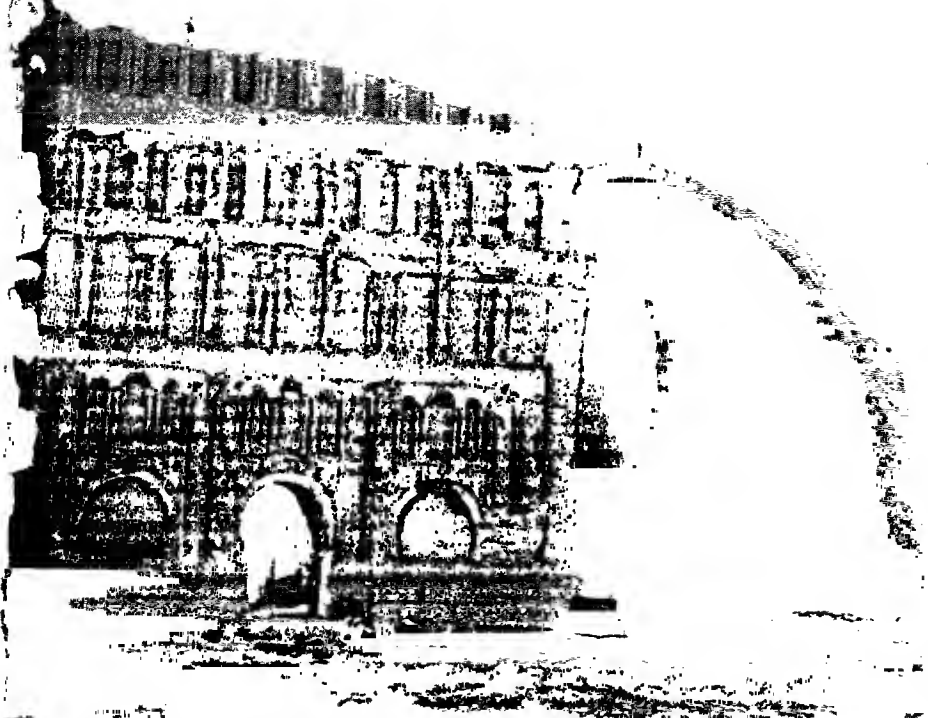
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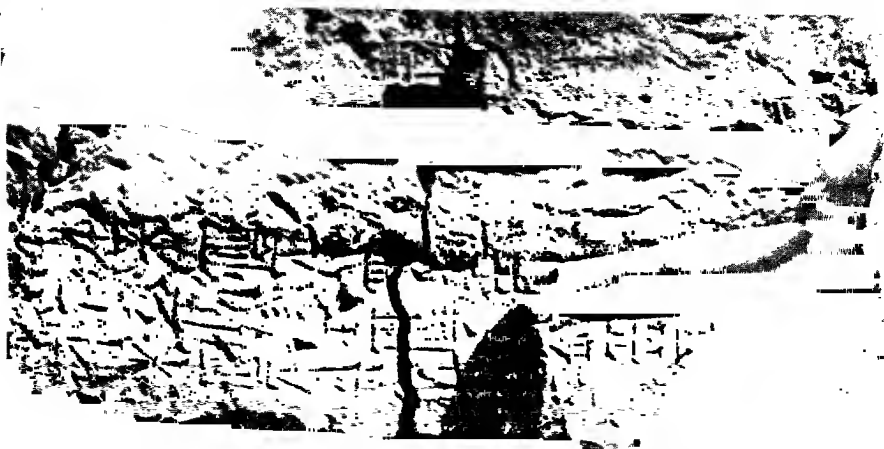
*A Kurdish peasant winnowing grain in the wind—a snapshot during a halt on the road journey in Northern Iraq.*



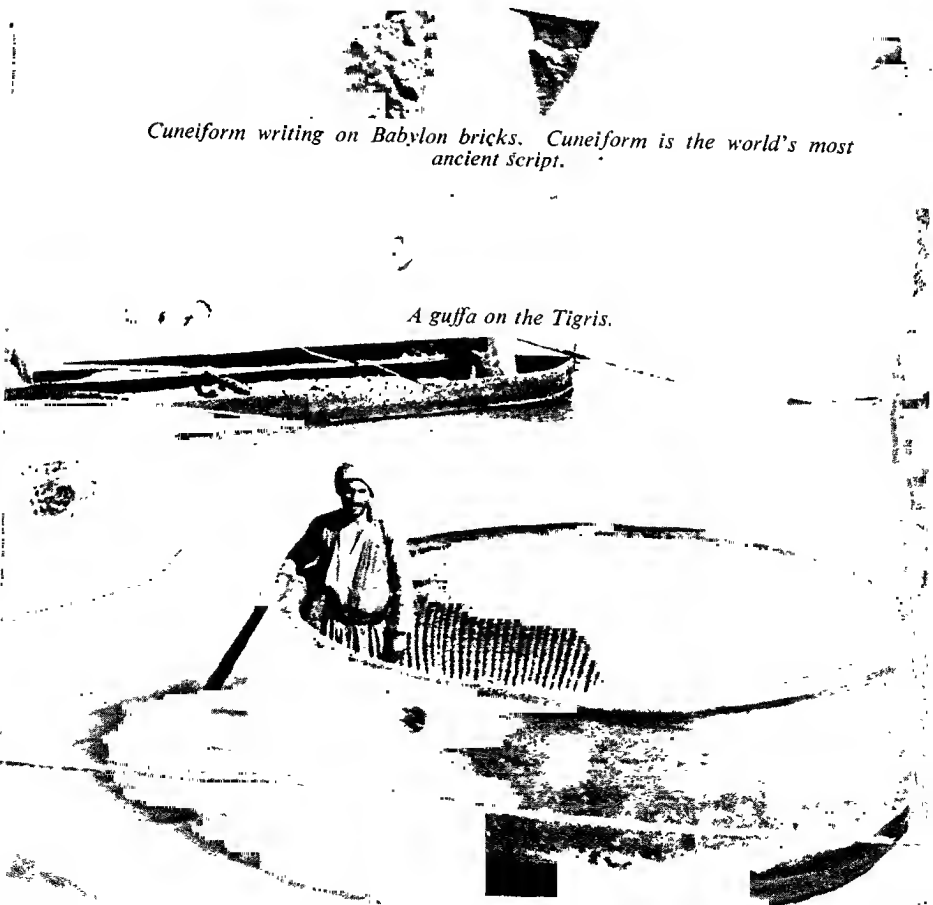
*The famous arch of Ctesiphon.*

*At Kirkuk, the end of the railway line in northern Iraq.*





*Cuneiform writing on Babylon bricks. Cuneiform is the world's most ancient script.*



*A guffa on the Tigris.*

# THE OVERLAND ROUTE FROM INDIA

By

STANLEY JEPSON

(Author of *Big Game Encounters, Motor Runs  
from Bombay.*)



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WITH 74 ILLUSTRATIONS  
*by the Author unless otherwise stated.*



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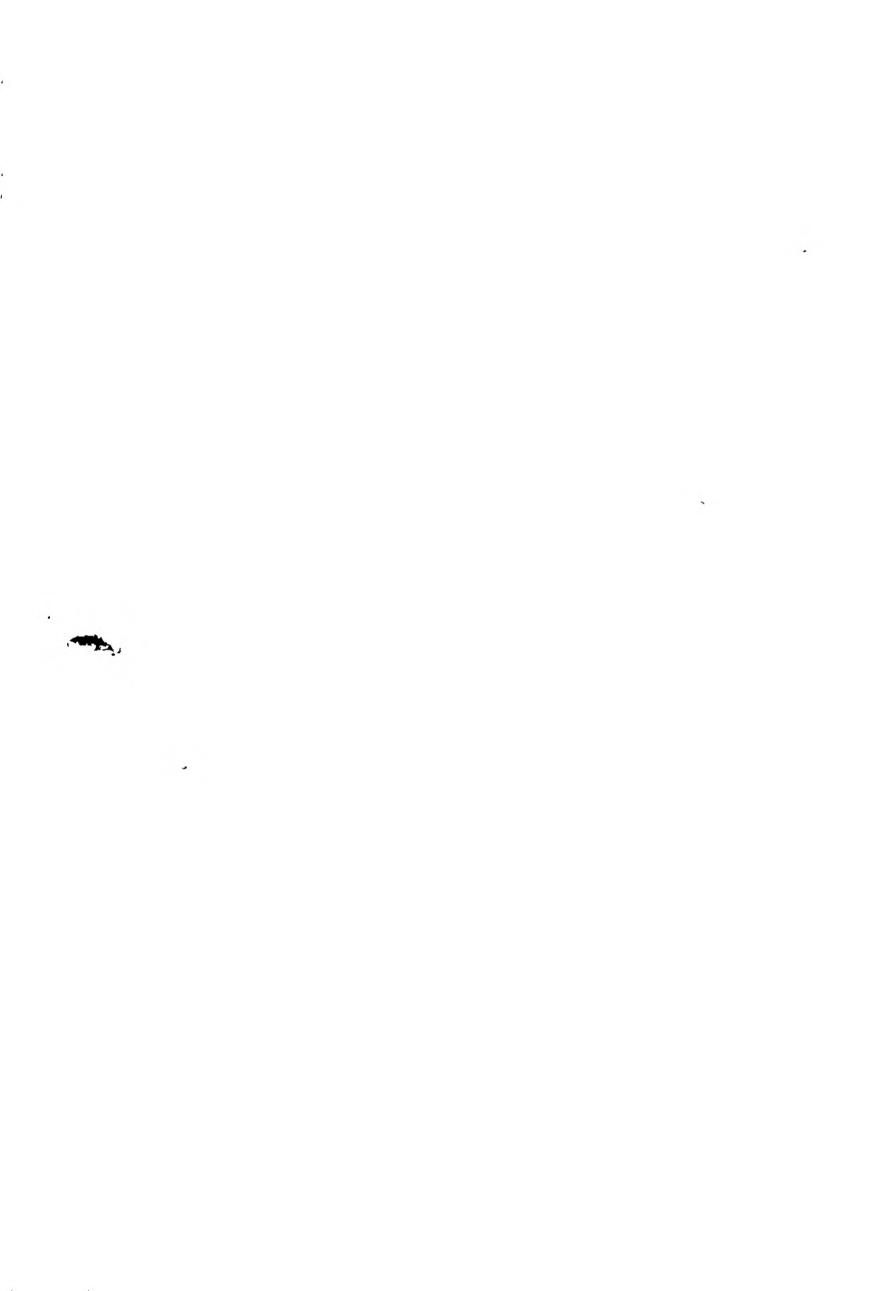
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To

MY MOTHER AND FATHER

*who first took me to Norway and  
Switzerland when I was very young,  
and caused me to be bitten by this  
travel bug.*



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## FOREWORD

By Colonel P. T. EHERTON

*The Author-Traveller who organised the Mount Everest  
Flight, and formerly H.M. Consul-General in  
Chinese Turkestan.*

**W**HAT are the real arts and crafts of modern travel ? To what extent and to what purpose, in terms of human currency, have they been changed and exchanged nowadays ?

The motor car has taken the place of the camel, the conquests of the racing car and the express train have, in their turn, been superseded by the latest and still faster momentum of aerial transport whose highway has no speed limits, tiresome corners, or dangerous bends ; in fact, the air is everywhere and is free.

With the exception of the ice caps, the fiercest jungle areas, and a few last remaining races of wild men, the world is open to the traveller and his chosen means of progression. There are now practically no geographical limitations to man on his way round the five continents and the seven seas.

My friend Stanley Jepson has done a great service in describing how an engineering dream will shortly become an actuality, for his record is the first one of importance describing a notable achievement in transport.

As a traveller in all parts of the world I can visualise how much this really means, both to the engineers who have toiled for so long and the people who will be whisked over the earth in so short a time. This overland route means bringing Bombay within a few days of London ; that has to be considered to grasp fully the swiftness of the journey, whilst it has to be considered in relation to all the other lightning trips which this generation has already grown accustomed to.

As I sit in my study in Hurlingham I know that I could be sipping an aperitif in Paris within two hours ; that I could be dining in Berlin ; strolling in Vienna—before nightfall. That symbolises aerial travel. I can reach New York in comfort within five days, having travelled in a floating Regent Street—shop-lined decks distracting me from the angry ocean. In fact, I can journey, as if on a magic carpet, to any part of the globe at such a pace that distance no longer exists, and the nations have become knitted together into a new pattern.

Dominating this scene is undoubtedly the overland route to India, the modern car and locomotive following in the footsteps of the camel through the heart of sleepy Asia. But whether one is travelling on land by rail or car, in the air, or on the sea, one is so often seeking to break the record by an inch or a minute.

Speed is always the elusive spirit which keeps a little ahead of the fastest vehicle, and so it will be until there is nothing more to achieve.

Yet has travel itself lost or gained by this increase in speed and expansion of locomotion, this delimiting of boundaries, and the general widening of prospects ? I have often asked myself this question without getting a satisfactory answer, even to myself, except that travel has now become almost limitless.

I have thought about it sledging across Siberia, trudging through the canyons and defiles of the Rockies, flying over the Andes and back, motoring through the Balkans, and moving high up in the Graf Zeppelin over the Atlantic.

Men travel today in a multitude of different ways, as well as for a variety of reasons. There is the Arab in the desert who starts out slowly, traversing no great distance the first day, so as to show himself master of the immensity lying ahead ; there is the Frenchman who hurries when he is outward bound so that he can linger longer on the return journey.



There is the Chinese philosopher who moves from place to place, more or less with his eyes shut, so that the object of the journey shall not disturb the momentum of his inner meditations ; there is the card addict who goes for a cruise in order to spend his time playing bridge.

I have met a traveller who told me that his chief peripatetic pleasure was in writing letters home to his wife, and I have heard of a man who went round the world primarily to test the accuracy of his watch.

Not one of these could describe the arts of travel or tell you what it was all about any better than you or I could. The beginning of a journey is clear enough, and the end should, of course, be allowed to look after itself, unless the companionship of enjoyment, care-free and nomadic, is to be jeopardised.

The start and impetus of travel is when an irresistible force meets an immovable bank manager, or when, in this island of ours, the voice of a ship's syren makes a fresh conquest. The start is a geometrical progression to see the other side of the hill, to catch up with the horizon for once, to forget about social circles and city squares, and the key of the front door that can so seldom be left behind.

A new and original, as well as helpful, angle on what may be called the middle distance of journeying, has been discovered by Mr. Jepson. He writes not so much for the inveterate wanderer or globe-trotter as for that deserving army of officials, business men and soldiers on leave, who travel not because they want to but because they must.

From this expedition we gather how, by adding thought and a few weeks to the journey you can convert a too well-known voyage into a fresh and revivifying experience. We capture the joys of journeying—the unending interest of comparisons ; the differing houses of Slav and Turk and Switzer, the crops of India high-piled in the tops of trees, and the flat harvestings of Central Europe. We see also the cunning saddles of Irak, Kurdistan, and Baghdad, with all

that they tell of horsemanship and the variations of wayfaring.

Being an experienced writer my friend is able to select just those things that the ordinary person wants to know about, and can find neither in guide or history books.

Where I might narrate in too great detail the substance and exact formation of the famous peacock throne, he will tell you of his longing to be left alone with it for a few moments, a hammer and a chisel in his hand. Where I might delineate the exact appearance of a Sultan or a Sheikh he will tell you what their wives think of them, which is probably a far more accurate description.

In this story of a sea, car, train and air journey from India to England, making the best use of local transport and travel, the author seeks an alternative and mainly overland route. In this way he combines holiday journey and home-coming—which in the long run is the best sort of way to travel.

Although I have many times been backwards and forwards to India and the East, I have never had the good fortune to encounter one half the interest and beguiling information held together for the first time within this book. This overland route should appeal to a great many ; it is exceptional, for anything which can annihilate the distance separating east from west transcends the smaller achievements of reducing continental journeys to a few hours. It is an epic which must remain in dignified solitude, for it ranks with the great arctic routes and the seemingly endless railroads which begin in Russia and end in Belgium. For this reason I not only welcome Stanley Jepson's work, but offer him grateful thanks on behalf of all those people who live twixt East and West.

P. T. ETHERTON

LONDON, *Feb.* 1938.

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

**M**ANY excellent travel books relate adventures in out-of-the-way places where the reader never hopes to follow.

This volume is not in that class, nor does it contain "adventures." It is a straightforward account of a sea, car, train and air journey from India to England. It is quite easy to traverse this age-old Overland Route from Basra to Europe, but I found that consolidated advice about it from one source was not easy to obtain. Hundreds of travellers nowadays go this way from the East to Britain and *vice versa*, especially those living in Iraq and Persia, etc. Thousands more will do so when the Iraq railway line is complete and the day's car journey eliminated—this "missing link" in the train system is now being completed and is promised by 1938 or '39.

Sooner or later the usual sea route between Britain and India loses its charm for the keen traveller. These folk in India look around for alternative routes to London. I know one man who goes a different way each year: he has been from India to London Eastward, to Basra and across the deserts of trans-Jordania, to Mombassa and thence *via* the Nile to Port Said, by air, by air and sea combined, by tramp steamer, by train, by car—and still he finds new ideas for his annual journey! He prefers the strange city to the ship's deck, the cosmopolitan crowds of a Near Eastern market to the ship's bar, the golden harvest fields of Central Europe to the blue of the Mediterranean. The average person who travels backwards and forwards on leave or business between East and West will not be attracted by quite such original routes as those mentioned, but he will be well rewarded by the very simple train and car journey along the Overland Route.

My wife and I have just completed such a journey-cum-holiday, which lasted five weeks: one could do it in two weeks from Bombay if necessary. There is any quantity of what the

travel agencies choose to call "literature," folders, etc., on the various countries. But I could find no book of any kind dealing with the whole journey, such as we should have wished to read before starting off, and *en route*. "Travel literature" of the ordinary kind is, of course, always published by people with something to sell—tickets, accommodation, tourist wares of all kinds. One expects only the rosy side of the picture to be painted. This book is a straightforward effort to paint a picture of the route as a whole, and it is written in the hope that it may be useful to other travellers between Europe and India along this very fascinating route twixt East and West. We deviated from the usual Simplon-Orient-Taurus route, and we tarried by the way, seeing a dozen countries.

I happen to be a keen amateur photographer, and am also afflicted with what my wife chooses to term the "home movies disease." *En route* we took hundreds of photographs and shot a 1,200 feet film, mostly in 16 mm. Kodachrome. Some of our experiences in this hobby are included in the book, as they will be of interest to other photographers and cine enthusiasts.

It may be that some will be reading this book as they travel along this route westwards. In this case attention may be called to Chapter 6, "In Retrospect," containing some practical advice. As it is more certain that the traveller will reach the end of his journey than that he will reach the end of this book, it might be better for such travelling readers to turn to this chapter right now.

STANLEY JEPSON

BOMBAY, 1938.

## THANKS

The Author wishes to acknowledge the valuable assistance given by the following :—

Mr. E. Huskisson, of London. Col. P. T. Etherton, of London, for writing the foreword. Mr. A. Milko, Royal Hungarian Consul in Bombay, for reading proofs of the chapter on Hungary, and Mr. H. J. C. Millett, I.F.S., for assistance with proofs. Mr. Turnan C. Boray, Commercial Attache to Turkish Embassy in London, of Bombay, for valuable assistance re maps, official photos, etc.

The Wagons-Lits Company, Iraq and Turkish State Railways ; official tourist organisations in Austria and Hungary for some photographs and for permission to use certain information from their tourist folders in the Appendix ; Messrs. Thomas Cook & Son for supplying much of the information in the Appendix through their London office. The map on the jacket and inside the book is from a handy booklet issued by the Wagons-Lits Company.

The following books are acknowledged as having been read during the journey, and recommended as very helpful :—

*Iraq*, excellently written guide book issued by the Iraq State Railways. *Official Guide to Museum of Topkapu Saray, Istanbul* (1936).

*What I Saw in Hungary*, by Charles Cunningham (Jarrolds, 12s. 6d.).

*Vienna Yesterday and Today*, by J. Alexander Mahan (Halm & Goldmann Succ., Vienna).

*Constantinople of Today*, by Theophile Gautier, (translation published by David Brogue, London, 1854).

Where the above have been used for quotations these have been duly acknowledged ; dates, etc., have been checked from the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

Chapter VII was broadcast by the Author from Bombay Station of All India Radio, and is published by courtesy of A. I. R.



## CHAPTER I.

### FROM EAST TO WEST.

“YOU *will* be bored, travelling all those thousands of miles in a train,” promised our grinning friends in Bombay, when we announced our intention of travelling Overland to England.

And weren't we bored ?

The sea journey up the Persian Gulf showed us quaint places like Bahrein, where we saw pearl fishers and visited one of the world's greatest oilfields ; we glided over palm-fringed waterways of the “ Venice of the East ; ” duly inspected the great dust-heap called Babylon, once the centre of world civilisation ; we stood on the North Bridge at Baghdad while an amazing motley of humanity flowed by—dignified Arabs, scowling Bedouins, veiled cyclops women guided by one peeping lustrous eye, chattering donkey boys and bedaggered Kurds, brilliantined and “ England returned ” Iraqi students with bright shoes of the wrong colour, expensive suits and Woolworth ties, men from Iran with (compulsory) tram conductor hats and purdah-released wives.

In Kurdistan we watched the harvesting, and in the Taurus we took snapshots of the Cilician Gates and blinked in ecstasy at the mountain beauty ; in Istanbul we watched Miss Turkey, 1937 edition, dressed in French gown with silk stockings, eyes twinkling merrily at my cine camera, as self-composed and untimid as any Hollywood star, but much prettier and giggling because her old black *charsaf* was at the bottom of her drawer by order of Mustapha Kemal ; we wandered through the covered bazaar and saw the most amazing clocks in the world ; sat under the trees in the Seraglio where years ago hand-picked lilies had sat and giggled at the dour jokes of the Grand Seigneur . . . . and then entrained for the Balkans. Here we rubbed shoulders with such a cavalcade of peasant costumes that we thought Sam

Goldwyn must have arrived to make a film. We filmed them in colour for nothing, and got smiles for a "thank you"—Sam would have paid a thousand dollars. We discovered hereabouts a greater admixture of religions than in an Eastern bazaar—Moslems, Jews, Greek Catholics, Armenian Catholics, Papists, Communists and Atheists—Turks, Serbs, Albanians, Greeks, Bulgars, Rumanians, Montenegrins, Armenians, Jews, even Americans. . . . all were on station platforms and in the carriages.

"Weren't we bored?"

The traveller along this age-old Overland Route from India will soon find that one of its chief attractions lies in the facilities afforded to trace connecting links between East and West. One is so often tempted to think of East and West as opposite poles—which they certainly may be, of course—that the links between may be forgotten. A train or road journey along this historic route gives one ample opportunity to discover the links, and to trace the gradual evolution from one particular method or thing to another, or to discover the underlying association of ideas in various social customs and habits.

A journey by sea affords no such opportunity. One leaves the East and except for brief glimpses of intermediary ports of call, one arrives in the West. The tendency towards longer and longer "hops" in air travel also robs this form of transport of its ability to provide the passenger with means of seeing the various countries. One flies from airport to airport with brief halts and passing glimpses of the various landing grounds. Unless one breaks journey, which is not always possible, there is no intimate contact with the various cities, no opportunity to see different races, and certainly nothing like the moving kaleidoscope of peoples and things which the train traveller can see from his carriage window.

The aforesaid carriage window, in fact, may easily become the cinema screen of one of the most fascinating travel films



it would be possible to conceive. Across the film passes a moving cavalcade. Camels of the Iraqi and Syrian deserts give way to bands of jingling donkeys with happy laughing donkey boys, followed later on by creaking bullock carts which persist in the picture for over a thousand miles—while the carts get larger and the wheels higher as the bullock cart tracks improve and become central European roads.

The veiled Arab women change into their unveiled Turkish sisters further north ; at first the *charsaf* is worn open, apparently as some sort of concession to former custom. Then in the regions further north, and in the Turkish cities, it is boldly discarded in favour of smart French dresses, costumes, etc. And is it fancy, or merely an habitual association of ideas, which makes the traveller think that with the absence of the purdah, there has gone that beautiful gliding gait which causes the Oriental to refer to a woman's walk as the glide of a swan over water ?

After the traveller has looked at these passing pictures for some days and hours, he will be struck forcibly by the thought that he is watching habits, customs, agricultural methods, etc., in transition. The moving train is perhaps a sort of time-machine, which takes him through the pages of a history book. Only by train or road are these things revealed to him, for the differences between ports like Tilbury, Marseilles, Port Said, and Aden are such that he cannot, in imagination, fill in the intermediary parts of the jigsaw.

One of the first examples the traveller might take is man's tillage of the soil. The Overland Route will take him from one of the hottest, driest places of the earth's surface by gradual stages to areas where probably nature is as bountiful as anywhere : from the desert areas of Iraq, with their biting winter winds and 120 degrees in the shade in the summer, (shades of the Garden of Eden ! ) to those great wheat-bearing central plains of Hungary and Austria, and on through the vine-clad hills and valleys of Switzerland and France. As

nature grows more and more bountiful, he will find the very simple solution to the improvement in the standard of living which forcibly strikes his mind. He will say to himself, "It is just a question of rainfall." And if he goes a little deeper into the matter, he may realize that perhaps man himself is responsible for those dry and barren regions, where a terrible price has been paid for the privilege of interference with nature centuries ago through the cutting down of vast areas of forest. God made the forests and man made the desert.

The wooden plough. I give full marks to the wooden plough in its simplicity of design and in its ability to move the hard soil throughout vast areas of Asia. It is simple and easy to construct; easier still to mend in villages where even the most elementary form of iron plough would provide a puzzle for the village blacksmith. One sees these ploughs turning over the soil constantly along this Overland Route. Mostly they are drawn by patient bullocks, sometimes even by camels. For a thousand miles, this age-old friend of man the tiller persists on our travel screen. Right into Jugo-Slavia it may be seen, with the same patient bullocks which are so familiar throughout India. Then further along, the implements improve in design, and change finally to the iron ploughs. Then the horse appears—and alas, finally, disappears, or partially disappears,—gone before the purr of the tractor in the machine-ridden West.

The hand implements of man the tiller undergo a strange metamorphosis. We start with things like the *powra*, and sickle, which do such remarkable work in the hands of that sturdy and inimitable worker the Indian cultivator. In the great wheat-growing plains of Kurdistan and on the borders of Iran, the long wooden fork appears, shining and slender and almost as lengthy as the cultivator himself. He wields it skilfully, particularly as he tosses the grain into the wind for winnowing; while nearby his fellow-workers ride round and round on a bullock-drawn sledge arrangement, which threshes

out the golden grain. This sledge arrangement, in its turn, is an improvement on the method adopted further East of threshing by handbeating, or by trampling out the grain through the feet of oxen.

Further north in Turkey the wooden fork grows smaller and handier, while metal points appear on its long and shining tines. Still further west in the Balkans, one sees the same fork, but now it has grown smaller, while in Central Europe they put a handle on the top and provide a foothold at the business end, because the soil is now softer—and finally one finds the same fork with tines completely made of metal.

Each country has of course evolved its own agricultural methods, dealing with its own problems in its own way. In India, where the depredations of wild animals like pig and deer, sometimes form a serious menace to the cultivator in forest surrounded areas, standing crops have perforce to be guarded night and day. Each little small-holding of rice or grain must have its *machan* or platform from which the cultivator may watch and guard. Often his vigil has to be aided with a rifle, or a *banduq* (gun) of some kind ; and if he is not the owner of such a privileged weapon, the din of a kerosene oil tin may prove equally useful. In southern Iraq and Kurdistan crops are still guarded, though here the menace is from human rather than animal enemies. In an irrigated area, a neighbour may even steal your water by the simple process of "accidentally" damming up a small channel. In a country where every man carries a knife at his belt, or a rifle over his saddle, such pretty pastimes doubtless lead to a good deal of blood-letting among people like the Kurds. As the Persians say, most troubles can be traced to the root causes of "*zam, zan, or zar*,"—in other words, "land, women, or gold."

The storing of cut crops provides the traveller with another interesting comparison. The Indian is very clever in storing straw or hay up trees, out of the reach of cattle

and away from the danger of fire, etc. The English farmer would be astonished to see the tremendous quantity of hay which can be accommodated in a good-sized tree. In Kurdistan I have seen cultivators busily engaged in spreading what was probably hay, or straw, over the flat roof of a house. In Central Europe the manner of stacking wheat along the harvest fields before garnering is entirely different from the picturesque *stooks* of the British harvest scenes. The difference may be only a question of habit, but it seems possible that the greater risk of rain during harvesting in Britain when compared with the clear skies of July in Central Europe, may have some connection with this little difference.

Watch the saddles. This will give you another fascinating line of comparison. The richly decorated wooden and cloth saddle to be seen in parts of Iraq, Kurdistan and Turkey, may delight the heart of an artist, but would certainly make sore the posterior of a horseman accustomed to a nice soft *Souter*. The design and changes of these high and picturesque saddles might probably provide a complete chapter, if one could only spare the time to sketch or photograph them. As for the camel saddles of Iraq—what a subject for a documentary film !

Houses ! Here is another subject for a chain of comparisons guaranteed to keep at bay the *ennui* of which so many spoon-fed folk complain on a long railway journey. I am not referring to the houses of the well-to-do to be seen in cities, for now-a-days these are all very much alike ; either they are of the highly ornamented miniature palace type, or like those converted barracks which have had queer verandahs stuck on to them afterwards. No, the rural homes of the people are the real houses of a nation, and a traveller will find that the size and condition of these homes, as they flash by his railway carriage, is some index of the national standard of living. Modern Turkey has attractive cities, and its recently built new capital of Ankara might have been lifted out of

modern Germany. Istanbul has neat modern houses alongside its marvellous array of historic buildings. But the rural homes of Turkey, if those along the railway line are a fair sample, are depressing enough. They compare very unfavourably with the little homes of Hungary and Jugoslavia, and much more so with those of Switzerland or France.

Dress is another thing to watch, and its association with the climatic peculiarities, or the transition of one form of national dress into another in the next country, will give the discerning traveller as much pleasure and amusement as any crossword puzzle. In hills we have the sandal, or *chapli*, most comfortable and manly of any footwear. But because it becomes uncomfortable when full of sand, it gives way in desert places to the slipper. In the harvest fields of Bulgaria what a joy it was to see the finely formed sturdy feet of the Bulgar-women, all unshod. Modern Britain delights in beauty contests for face and figure, and the standard here is doubtless high. But having regard to the pinching, cramping, and at times mutilation (almost) which must necessarily accompany the modern craze for all high-heeled shoes, one wonders whether anything like the same standard could be set for a British competition for perfect feet. If it is true there is character in the hands, then why not in the feet—assuming of course that you leave them as God made them ! I recall at this moment a Colonel of my old Indian Army regiment who always used to examine the feet of men parading before him when selecting recruits. I thought in my ignorance this was merely due to the fact that a good soldier must have good feet on which to march. Not at all. The Colonel informed me he was reading the character of these men in their walk, and he had trained his eye to do this when they were barefoot. Having regard to the men the Colonel selected, and their subsequent careers on field service, I do not think his claim was mere affectation. Be that as it may,

I shall always associate Bulgaria in my own mind with good feet, particularly in the case of its womenfolk ! It is in Bulgaria, by the way, where one parts with the flat roofs which are universally evident from the beginning of the journey. The wise traveller sleeps on the hotel roof in Baghdad in the summer, and one of the great blessings of these houses throughout Turkey and Asia, and in the hottest parts of Turkey in Europe, must be the ability to get fresh air all night while in bed on the house-roof. In Jugo-Slavia in July we saw from the train really big double bedsteads silhouetted on the housetops.

But to return to this question of clothes. The most striking change along the line occurs, of course in Turkey. One might expect that the Turkish girls and women, suddenly brought out of their *charsafs*, unveiled at last for all the world to see after such centuries of obscurity, would be bashful and retiring. Not a bit of it ! One is apt to forget of course that this generation of Turkish girls have been out of purdah for many years now. Nevertheless, their dignity and composure, the way in which they would look the rude stranger in the face, must necessarily strike the traveller with preconceived ideas as a remarkable tribute to the versatility of woman. One wonders how long the Arab woman, or the good class Indian town bred purdah lady, would take to adapt herself to such a change. Probably not a quarter as long as most people would think. In Vienna a Parsee friend with a Viennese wife told me "It doesn't matter if you want to stare at a pretty face. In your country and mine, it may be considered rude, but here they like being looked at, and I really think some of them would think it rude if you did not stare a little !" That may not apply to the Turkish lady, but it certainly is a fact that with their large and lustrous eyes, full lips, and round faces, dark hair cleverly shingled, mingled, or bongled, they are, as our American cousins would say very "easy on the eye."

I had an illuminating conversation, by the way, with a Turkish friend about purdah, which is now abolished by law, for under the decree of Kemal no woman may walk veiled.

"Do they like being out?" I asked referring to the women.

"Well, what do *you* think? Of course they do! What woman really likes to cover herself up in that manner? Do you think that comes natural to the feminine nature?"

"But what about the husbands and fathers?"

"No, they don't like it."

"Jealousy?"

"Oh no, not a bit of it," and his laugh told me I was very wide of the mark. "It's a question of expense! While women wore the *charsaf* it did not much matter what was underneath the black silk veil, which lasted, of course, a long time. The wife herself did not much mind because nobody saw it. But *nowadays*.....!" And his expressive shrug of the shoulders indicated to me better than any words could have done, how the poor husbands of Turkey now have to buy their wives pretty hats, blouses, dresses, costumes, scarves, jewellery and other knick-knacks, formerly undemanded!

So that apparently is the explanation of the hold which purdah has on the East! Or so I am informed by one who knows.

But that is in passing. Suffice it to say the black *charsaf* is being replaced throughout Turkey by Western dress. Let us hope it is as good for trade as we think it must be, for the change has certainly robbed Istanbul of much of its tourist attraction. The beauty of the Bosphorus, the glowing colours of the Golden Horn remain; there are still the domes and minarets, and those marvellous show places which were once the homes of the Sultans; one may still buy beautiful jewellery which once graced pretty Russian necks or wrists, and has found its way from Russian refugees into the Covered Bazaar

of Istanbul ; there are still picturesque fruit-sellers, and a few pavement hawkers.

But how the crowds have changed ! If you look no further than the streets, you might as well be in Paris or Vienna. The men all wear modern suits, cloth caps, felt or bowler hats. (" But we're not a circus !" said my friend, when I was bemoaning this fact to him). The abolition of the fez is, of course, almost as drastic a change as the abolition of the purdah, and is a remarkable tribute to the power and personal influence of Turkey's beloved dictator. One wonders in comparison, what sort of dictator could abolish the *pagari*, and other head-dresses connected with Eastern religions from India, and how long it would take him ? Even Mr. Ghandi, with all his influence, was unsuccessful in making the Ghandi cap universal. It is worn by only a very small proportion of people in India, and then only on occasion. But perhaps this has something to do with the fact that the Ghandi cap is admittedly a somewhat unsuitable form of head covering for a hot and sunny country, though it has of course the inestimable advantage for India that it is cheap. Regarding the fez I was told that when legislation was unsuccessful in abolishing it, ultimate success was gained through the great personal influence of Kemal Attaturk. I certainly saw one fez only in the whole of Turkey, and that was worn by a boy riding a donkey in a very remote part of the Taurus mountains, where he obviously did not fear the village Bobby. One cannot help but bemoan the passing of the tasselled fez which seemed to go so well with the features of the Turkish men.

West of Turkey harvest fields were gay with the red and blue aprons of the national costume of the Bulgar and Hungarian women. This is one of the most picturesque of any national costumes, and it was good to see it being worn freely. Even in smart Vienna, one sees the traditional Viennese costume still in favour ; the red aprons lend a touch of colour in the streets.

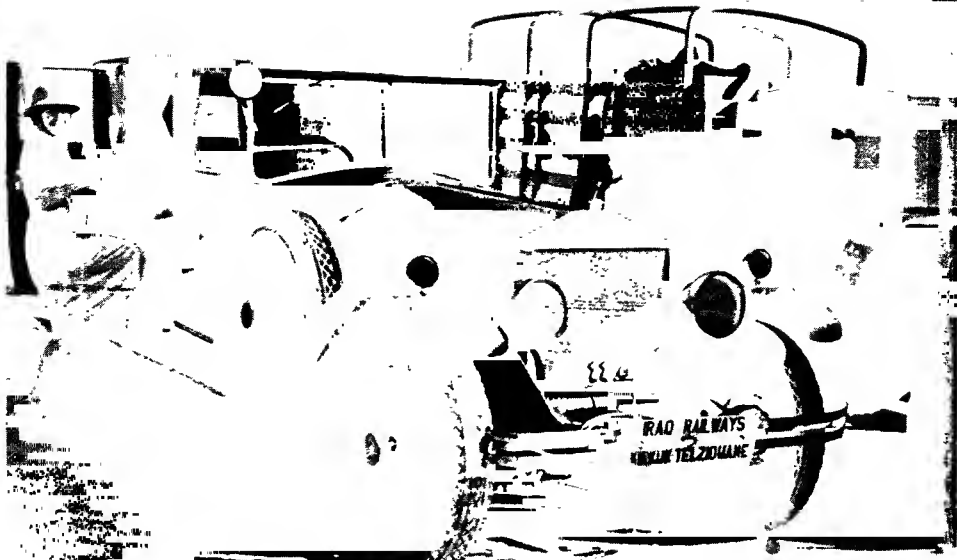




*Harvesting Kurdish grain in northern Iraq. The threshing sledge is drawn over the wheat spread on the ground.*



*The interior of a Kurdish tea house by the wayside.*



*Transferring from rail to road at Kirkuk, the end of the railway line in Northern Iraq.*

*A bridge in Kurdish country, south of Mosul over the Lesser Zap. The local motorist believes in plenty of luggage.*



Talking about the womenfolk, another fascinating thing to look for on this journey is their manner of carrying their babies. The hip is almost the universal method throughout India and many other parts of Asia. In other countries, one may see the babies carried in a sort of bundle behind, and at times one has to look hard before realising the bundle *is* a baby. Travelling westwards we watched carefully for the first perambulator.

The expert linguist might occupy himself by discovering just where one language merged into another ; or how many languages the people on the borders spoke. For this purpose, however, a train journey would be really much too fast. We found only one word which followed us right from India as far as Turkey, and that is probably the best known word in the East. It is "baksheesh !"

I have tried to set out in this chapter a design for some sort of observation from the train, which may keep the traveller from feeling bored and which may provide much food for thought. But it has to be admitted that the Overland Route has also its disadvantages from one point of view. What home-coming traveller from the East does not anticipate and realise in full flavour the thrill of arrival in England or France? After becoming accustomed to the brown and dried, dusty landscape of the East, how one reacts to the green pastures of England, first seen after landing at Tilbury or some other port. The neat fields with their fences and hedges, the cows, horses and sheep, seem so large and good to look upon after the Eastern cattle. The peaceful villages with their graceful spires—each and all of these things thrill the home-comer as nothing else ever can. He loves to sit in his carriage corner and quietly drink in the scenery as it flows past, revelling in such happy contrasts with his former tropical environment. Such contrasts and such joys are not for the traveller by the Overland Route. His transitions are more gradual, and he must find his reactions in other ways.

## CHAPTER II.

### INDIA TO BAGHDAD.

**T**HE traveller along the Overland Route between India and Britain has not only the choice of several attractive alternative routes and deviations, but he can also vary the method of reaching his railhead at Basra. If time is valuable, he should of course fly from Karachi to Basra or Baghdad. He can do this very conveniently, though preliminary reservations of the seats some time ahead should be made very early, particularly in the case of the Spring season, when the planes are very full.

But let us assume that he prefers to go by sea. The tradition of beginning a holiday from India with a sea voyage dies hard, for the cruise is regarded as a preliminary rest and an essential part of the holiday. Our voyage started in this manner, and because it was the hot time of the year we chose what the British India Steam Navigation Company call "the fast Mail Service." This operates between Bombay and Basra weekly, and is under postal contract Bombay-Karachi, and Bombay-Basra, connecting with the Indiawards English mail which arrives on Thursday. Where the mail boat arrives later, B. I. Gulf Steamer is detained to connect. Here are the timings for the fast service at the time of writing :—

Bombay	..	..	<i>Leave</i>	..	Thursday.
Karachi	..	..	<i>Arrive</i>	..	Saturday.
Bushire	..	..	<i>Leave</i>	..	Wednesday.
Khoramshahr	..	..	<i>Leave</i>	..	Thursday.
Basra	..	..	<i>Arrive</i>	..	Thursday.

Where time does not matter, the B. I. Subsidiary Mail Service which also leaves Bombay weekly, providing an opportunity for seeing little-known Gulf and Indian Ports like Muscat, Jask, Dubai, Bahrein Island, Mangrole, Veraval, and many others. Some of the ports are omitted on certain

voyages and the exact itinerary should be ascertained at the time of booking.

It has always seemed to me that a week is the ideal period for a sea voyage. In the week one is getting to know fellow passengers ; the second week one knows some of them too well ; and the third week many of them can get on your nerves. This Basra trip was just a week. The voyage is a leisurely and pleasant one—though the pleasure may easily be modified during the monsoon up to and just beyond Karachi ! I was told that in the winter it can be very cold in the Gulf, so that ample warm clothing is necessary—and still more necessary, of course, higher up in Iraq and Turkey for the rail journey. The best time is undoubtedly from the middle of March to the beginning of May or in the Autumn. But I would not like to put off the traveller who has to do the journey at any other time of the year. I am merely emphasizing which is the ideal time. I should imagine that at no time is the journey really uncomfortable, for the hot (or cold) part is of very short duration, and certainly no worse than the Red Sea can be during certain seasons. Circumstances compelled us to start our own journey on July 1st, but the fates were kind to us and the reputation of the Persian Gulf for being one of the hottest of seas during mid-summer was strangely belied.

“ Hot as Hell, sir ! ” was the comforting reply of a sailor to an enquiry about the Gulf when we left Bombay. Strangely enough we found the Gulf quite pleasant and at no time did it remind me of the Red Sea in October or May, and the stifling conditions which exist on crowded passenger steamers in “ the season.” On two nights I slept on deck but after that I kept to my cabin and we had no need of a cabin fan. As Red Sea travellers know, cool weather in hot waters is a question of luck : given a following breeze, conditions can be most uncomfortable. But with a head or a side wind blowing through your cabin window, life can be very pleasant. All

the same it is advisable to provide oneself with a white dinner jacket if one wishes to change; though even this is not *de rigueur* on the B. I. ships. There is one kind of wind in the Gulf which you may pray to avoid. It is called, I think, the *shimal* (with accent on the *al*) and it comes off the desert nicely cooked and laden with a very fine stinging sand. It gets into your hair, clothes, early morning tea and everywhere else; while the effect on the eyes is very irritating. Glare-glasses are indicated.

But to return to our voyage. There is plenty to see at Karachi—that thriving northern Gateway of India. We were fortunate in having friends there, and one of Karachi's leading citizens Khan Bahadur Katrak, and his son Mr. Katrak, F.R.G.S., very kindly showed us the highlights of Karachi, including the fine view from Clifton, a seaside resort just outside, and its high and dry pier—certainly an acquisition to any great city. For animal lovers, the Karachi Zoo and surrounding gardens are well worth a visit, seeming to me one of the best kept Zoos of the East. The Drigh Road Aerodrome provides plenty to see, though it is some distance out by car. Here are the mooring masts and giant hangar provided for the ill-fated British airships which were never destined to use them. The hangar is a colossal affair, but it is difficult to see to what other use such a high structure can conveniently be put, though we noticed a few small planes inside, looking like small boys lost in a great cathedral. The winding drums and engineering devices of the mooring mast are worth seeing.

Our vessel, the good ship "Varsova," made its next port of call at Bahrein Island on the Western side of the Gulf, where it stayed most of the day. I was told that during this time of the year ships call at Bahrein and Bushire alternate weeks, though I do not know whether this is a permanent arrangement. Anyway, we were very fortunate in seeing Bahrein, which now has much of interest to show the

traveller. Bahrein itself, the largest of a group of islands, is about 27 miles long and about 10 miles wide.

"May we land?" we asked the Captain.

"You will have to get permission from the Sheikh of Bahrein," was the reply. This was soon arranged, and I was introduced to an American gentleman, Mr. C. W. Deacon, who kindly offered to "take us ashore." "Taking us ashore" consisted of putting us in his car, driving us all round the oilfields at the other end of the island, showing us the refinery, the wonderfully up-to-date hospital, clubs, cinema, and entertaining us to lunch in his own delightful home—to my mind a remarkable example of typical American hospitality in the East to two complete strangers. Mr. Deacon, who is a very busy man, himself insisted on showing us round and spared no pains to make our visit complete.

The visitor to Bahrein will not be impressed by a close view of the island. As with many other Eastern places, distance really lends enchantment to the view. From the sea it appears to be a pretty island with palm groves of great luxuriance and beauty. Once ashore you see the capital town of Manameh, a long straggling place of some 8,000 people, chiefly of the Wahabi sect, who live on fish, dates, and seaweed, among other things. But apart from one or two cultivated oases, the rest of the Island is a dreary rocky waste, drab in colour, and supporting very little vegetation except what is necessary for a few camels and occasional sheep near the oases.

Men say that where you can find little else from Nature you may strike oil, and it is amazing how true this old saying is. Bahrein is a good example, for parts of it reminded me vividly of the Tommy's description of Mesopotamia during the War—"Miles and miles of sweet—Fanny Adams, sir!" No one would expect, on first acquaintance with these dreary wastes, that here are two of Nature's most valuable products—oil and pearls.

This oilfield is developing at great pace and promises to be one of the foremost in the world. We were told that there were some forty wells at that time yielding around 30,000 barrels of oil per day. The Bahrein Petroleum Company goes under the name of "Bapco" for short, and when completed, its refinery will be one of the most up-to-date in the world with a daily capacity of 25,000 barrels. We saw one of the bore holes and the great derrick where they were finding oil thousands of feet below the surface. Miles and miles of oil pipe lines of various sizes run along the Island, and one of the problems of the Company is the shallowness of the surrounding sea. In fact, when we were about two miles from the Port in our launch, I was solemnly invited to get out and walk ashore ! For this reason oil pipe lines for tankers run out in the sea for some three miles.

As may be imagined, Bapco have many thousands of employees—American, European, Indian and Arab. Providing for the needs of all these people in one of the hottest parts of the world, where the temperature in the summer approaches 120 degrees Fahrenheit and where at times the humidity is at a maximum, produces some pretty problems. The manner in which these problems have been tackled by the Company are a tribute to man's resourcefulness.

Here in July, with the temperature at 110 outside, we found ourselves eating a delightful lunch in the refrigerated-flat of the Manager. Inside, the air was dry and the temperature could not have been much over 80, if that. No fans were necessary, and it is no exaggeration to say that this flat, or rather bungalow, was far more comfortable than any of the flats one sees in Bombay. The secret was, of course, air-conditioning, which is in many of the houses, etc., and will probably be eventually adopted universally in all the buildings and offices.

The bungalow of our host had a verandah all round, it was fly-proof, and no mosquito nets were necessary ; while



the fittings in the bathrooms, house laundry, etc., were of the very latest American type, having been imported direct from the States. Telephones were universal, and the Company were fortunate in having a supply from the oilfields of fuel gas for cookers. The refrigerator which was installed in the centre of the house at the rear of the hall, seemed quite sufficient to cool the whole place, and we sat round an electric fire-place which would doubtless be a great boon in the cold winters of Bahrein.

The manager, Mr. Deacon, evidently guessed what I was thinking.....“Ah, yes, but this is the Resident Manager’s house! Of course it is comfortable! What about the others—the lesser lights?” So he took me through some of the homes of the subordinates. These were all designed on the same lines as the Manager’s own house. One elderly Scottish lady showed us round her home, and after my experience of Bombay, and its flats, I really envied her. Her house was air-conditioned, and though she had one or two table fans they were not being used. It was fly and mosquito-proof, and all fittings were of the latest and neatest. The kitchen was tiled, large, light and airy, one of those places which you see too rarely in real life, and more frequently in the pages of housekeeping magazines. It would have turned any Bombay memsahib green with envy, and the average up-country Indian cook, with his wretched little white-washed and filthy cookhouse, might have been pardoned for mistaking it was something to do with the *gol kamra*, or drawing-room. Next door was the house laundry, a thing unknown in Indian houses. Here there were the latest electric washers, driers, etc., but this part of the house was not, of course, air-conditioned.

“I should think you could almost do without a servant?” my wife remarked.

“I had two Arab ‘boys’ at first,” she replied, “but one of them was a bit of a nuisance and I got rid of him.

Then I got rid of the other and I find I can manage much better on my own." Readers who have lived in tropical conditions in India, and other countries, where even the poorest family must have their cook, their sweeper, their 'boy,' and what not, will realize that this is very unusual, and is approaching the ideal that many people in the East sometimes sigh for. For the East also has its servant problem, though here it is often a matter of quality rather than quantity.

In these houses, by the way, we found a cooled water supply. This must have been a great boon. The water was cooled for a group of houses in a central cooler, and these big wooden towers were to be seen towering among the groups of bungalows. This cooled water was used for cooling the air in the group of houses, a more economical arrangement than by individual refrigerators.

Naturally, all this activity has brought prosperity to Bahrein, which at the time was just beginning to feel a decline in its pearling industry. The present Sheikh of Bahrein, a most enlightened ruler under British protection, is of the family of El Kalifa, and he is given a royalty on the oil output. The ownership of Bahrein has been disputed of recent years, and as far back as the middle of the last century the Persians threatened it, while in 1875 the Turks laid their hands on it. British interference was successful in maintaining the integrity of Arab rule, and this is the reason for the present British connection.

Though we motored over the islands for many miles, the car at the finish was spotlessly clean. With memories of Indian roads, I rubbed my eyes in amazement ! This remarkable achievement on a desert island was due to the oiling of the roads by the oil company. The road surface becomes quite black, and I asked about the effect of the oil on the tyres, but was assured that it did not pick up or affect the rubber. Apparently the oil binds the road surface together and mixes so well with the road dressing that skids are not feared.

The famous pearl fleet operates some miles from the island, so that it is not practicable to see the dhows at work, during a stay of a few hours. But one may buy pearls in the bazaar, or see the pearl divers in their ships by the quay. This we did, and the expenditure of a rupee or so enabled us to watch how it was done and to shoot a little film. A black bone clip is produced and fastened on the nose, to render the lungs watertight ! Nose being duly "corked," the diver can stay under for two or three minutes if needs be, I was told ; though I imagine he doesn't often want to do this, especially as the oyster beds are sometimes in fifty feet of water. The average submersion is about a minute. He may be lowered on a stone, and takes below with him a basket of rope, connected with the pearling ship by a line. Into this basket go the oyster shells. It is no picnic down below, and I asked if the divers carried knives in case of sharks. I was told they preferred to rely on rolling themselves into a ball shaped mass, thus offering the old shark no means of biting—apparently the idea is that the shark must have a loose limb to seize. Just before doing this the divers kick up the mud or sand at the bottom, which acts as a smoke screen, defeating the shark's vision.

One can imagine the joy of these people when a really big pearl is found, one of those perfectly round and pinkish pearls of which every girl dreams. The jeweller calls this kind of pearl one with a fine "skin" and "orient;" in other words it has the texture of a baby's cheek, is flawless as the babe's skin, and its translucent white may have an iridescent sheen. The yellow tinted pearls from these waters are mostly taken by Arab dealers to the markets of Bombay, where a street exists near Mumbadevi which is really the pearl mart of the Orient. Here pearls can be seen being bought and sold, drilled and mounted by Indian workmen.

The whiter pearls are sent north from Bahrein to Basra and thence to Baghdad. I was told that a pearl was found in

Bahrein waters some years ago, and the size and quality was such that it was sold for over £100,000 in Paris, though the local people parted with it for a very much smaller sum. According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* the most perfect pearl in existence is believed to be "La Pellegrina" in a Leningrad Museum, a 28-carat Indian globular pearl of singular beauty ; and the largest known pearl is one of irregular shape in the Beresford Hope collection in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, this weighing three ounces, with a circumference of four and a half inches. We saw some which must have run it close for size and weight in the Palace Museum at Istanbul, where the collection of large gems leaves one rather breathless to think these have survived the many violent changes through which Turkey has passed.

A few weeks before our arrival at Bahrein tragedy had befallen one of the pearling ships. We were told in dramatic language how "Persian pirates" had attacked one of the Arab dhows because they were said to be pearling in Persian waters, and after a gruesome fight the dead bodies had been brought back to Bahrein. Evidently pearling is no sinecure, and I was not astonished to learn that owing to the nature of the work pearlery die young.

The visitor to Bahrein will see thousands of mounds dotting the countryside. Centuries of weather action have hardened the outer covering of clay and gravel until they look like hard pies ! They are—very hard ! The pies were opened by excavators and revealed sepulchres with an outer and inner chamber constructed of limestone slabs. The relics were Phoenician, and judging by the number of these graves there must have been many thousands of Phoenicians here at one time. We were left speculating idly whether the victims were the dead of battle or whether some great plague killed off thousands. Whatever the origin and the story behind them, the number of these sepulchral mounds is rather astonishing and should provide material for the spades of

further excavators. I was told that recently a Russian had done some work in them but found very little for his pains.

Returning to the quay to join our tossing petrol-driven launch we had ample opportunity of examining the really beautiful irrigated gardens and oases near the main town. My conscience makes me stress these, lest the reader be left with a wrong impression of Bahrein as a wholly repulsive desert isle. Most of the island certainly has this forlorn appearance, but where water can be brought to the fields most luxuriant crops result. I saw some little gardens and lawns near some of the oilfield houses which were very gay. All over the desert places of the world it is the same. Bring water to the desert and all manner of flowers blossom freely.

The inhabitants of Bahrein, by the way, are of mixed blood Arab, Persian and Omanite, renowned through the Gulf ports and further north for their commercial and industrial ability.

So back we went to the ship in an unpleasant monsoon sea which forced us to assume the horizontal in the launch, and caused no little merriment through gymnastics when transshipping to the ship's gangway. Then northwards quietly and restfully to the port of Basra. *En route* the great oil port of Abadan was passed, a vast hive of human activity. We saw it at night, and never shall I forget the long lines of tankers and the well illuminated docks and refineries, set against a red glow from the oilfields—as impressive a sight in the middle of the silent night as any traveller could see.

Up the river, passing picturesque dhows, to the great port of Maquil, which has grown tremendously since war days. Here we were met by a special Railway Inspector, whose duty it is to smooth the path of the tourist. He was from Madras and I was not surprised to learn later that Mr. G. C. Subba Rao had done such good work during the War and later that he had blossomed into a Rai Sahib. He presented

me with a little book he had compiled on the pilgrim and tourist traffic passing through Basra, which I found unusually interesting. Thousands of pilgrims from India, Persia and Arabia visit sacred places like Kerbala, Najaf, Baghdad, Kadhimain and Samarra throughout the year, particularly during the pilgrim season, which varies each year. Their influx must mean big problems for the various authorities, and the Iraq State Railways find it a useful addition to their revenue, but the cost of a pilgrim ticket must be cut to the bone. At Basra there are the tombs of Hazrat, Zubair, Talha, Hassan Basri, and at Shaibah Junction there is the tomb of Hazrats Anas bin Malik. As an example of what the railway can do here is Coupon Book A for third class pilgrims for about Rs. 14, or just over an English pound :—

Ticket from Maquil to Kerbala or *vice versa*.

Ticket from Kerbala to Kadhimain or *vice versa*.

Ticket from Kadhimain to Samarra, return.

Ticket from Kadhimain or Baghdad to Basra or *vice versa*.

This must be one of the world's records for cheap travel, for reference to the map will show long distances in the above journeys. The coupons are valid for three to five months, with 50 kilos (a kilo is 2.2 lbs.) of luggage for each adult pilgrim.

The worthy inspector secured for us a local taxi, and warned us that as there was no meter we would have to bargain for the journey. This we did for a complete day's sightseeing, morning and afternoon, plus taking us to the station to catch the night train to Baghdad. These desert rail journeys are made by night, which makes them quite comfortable. We bargained, and used as I was to the typical Sikh taxidriver of Bombay, I was astonished when the driver smilingly accepted my preliminary offer of ten rupees for the whole business. But we covered such distances and found this English-speaking Arab driver so useful as a guide through Basra, that conscience

made me add a sum extra to the bargained price when we parted.

The Iraq Railways Rest House, where we first arrived for a "wash and brush down", was in the nature of a surprise. One has come to be suspicious of the term "rest house" in India, for often it implies anything but rest. Barren and dirty rambling bungalows, with indifferent food out of tins—Indian residents know what "Rest House" sometimes (but not always) means. Here was the ideal. A modern bungalow with bedrooms neatly furnished, and a central lounge with plenty of fans, writing desks, comfortable arm-chairs and settees, books, magazines and English newspapers. On the other side of imposing curtains was the restaurant, where the meals were good and well served. A billiard room and a little bar completed the establishment, which was supervised by a European lady. As we spent several hours in this Rest House during the middle of the day when it was best to be indoors out of the July heat, such surroundings were appreciated. But I was told the whole establishment was being transferred to the magnificent airport building then in course of construction by the landing ground. In front of the Rest House was a pleasant lawn where one could sit in the evening.

Basra must be familiar to thousands of Europeans and Indians with memories of service there during the Great War. Probably their memories may not be of the happiest, for war conditions in "Mesopotamia" were somewhat severe. To such, a visit to the Basra of to-day would provide a delightful contrast. Certainly we enjoyed our day there in spite of the July heat, and I shall never forget the brief gondola trip on the waters of what is justly called "the Venice of the East." Through verdant watercourses one glides with Arab gondolier to the local Grand Canal, lined with ocean-going steamers from many ports. Palm groves wave their delicate green fronds in the breeze on either side, with here and there pretty

gardens stretching down to the waterside, or to latticed windows hiding peeping dark eyes. The surroundings and atmosphere reminded me more of Srinagar than of Venice. The local gondola, by the way, is called a *balam*, and though the youthful gondolier has no Italian song, his merry eyes and adept wielding of the pole make him worth watching. Also, the craft are painted in brilliant colours, as opposed to the sombre black of the Venetian gondolas, and my Kodachrome cine film registered some pretty shots. As we reclined on the *balam* cushions I thought it a pity I didn't know Arabic, otherwise we might have been regaled with stories of Sinbad the Sailor, of *Arabian Nights* fame. For Sinbad lived at Basra, and chose his home town wisely I think !

We were too early for the date harvest, but date palms lined the roads along which our car took us. I was not surprised to learn that the Basra area has some eight of the twenty million date palms in Iraq, which together produce two-thirds of the total world consumption of dates. "One hundred thousand tons of dates" may not convey much to the reader, but this is the total yearly export from Basra. Which all reminds me of war days in East Africa when I lost my emergency ration, and walked about the jungle there for many weeks happy in the thought that I had a cigarette tin jammed full of stoned dates as a substitute—until I awoke one night to find myself in the middle of a track of those horrid little biting *siafu* ants ! The lid had come off the emergency ration !

In the heat of the early evening we found ourselves in the local cinema, where we enjoyed a film of ancient vintage, an English talkie with captions printed at the bottom in French. Thence to the new airport, an imposing affair in the building, looking more like the palace of some Indian potentate or some vast secretariat, than an air station. Apparently it is to be used by all the air lines which find in Basra such a convenient



Clapham Junction of the East. Great corridors, lofty rooms, offices, restaurants, tennis courts—these and much more were soon to emerge. What a pity these air travellers will see nothing of old Basra in their rush through. I did not envy them.

Thus in the cool (but not very), of the evening, when we found ourselves on the little Maquil Station. It was a stimulating thought that from here we could go by train, with a short road break in the journey, right through to Victoria, London Town. But who wants to go right through? We were glad the tickets allowed a break of journey for twenty-four hours for every hundred miles in addition to the time occupied by the journey—an allowance ample enough for the most gargantuan sightseeing appetite. We said goodbye to our courteous friend Rai Saheb Subba Rao of Madras, who had arranged our luggage in the very comfortable compartment. This was a coupé, but with the bunks alongside instead of upper and lower as in India. This alteration is doubtless preferable in a hot climate. We found ample accommodation for luggage, and the set of bedding which was provided was clean and good—quite up to the high standard set by the Wagons-Lits Company later on.

The cabin boy was most attentive. He assured us we had escaped the hot weather by ten days—though it seemed quite warm enough for us. He counted out carefully and laboriously ten sheets of toilet paper, placed soap and towels in position, and slid noiselessly out of view.

We had decided to break journey at Hilla. I craved sight of Babylon, seat of the world's civilisation. Ordinarily the train for Baghdad arrives at Hilla shortly after dawn, allowing the hot weather visitor to see the ruins in the cool of the morning. Our train started later, an alteration due to the fireworks of certain Arab malcontents who had demonstrated by firing at the train about a fortnight before—without any damage apparently.

The sight of the small Rest House at Hilla Station was

depressing. But its whitewashed exterior belied its real comfortable character. The villainous looking Arab inside proved a gem of a servant. He produced the most wonderful sausages and mash, chops, and other items on the menu. One does not expect good food in the middle of a desert, especially in midsummer in Iraq. Yet the omelette this man produced still lingers in my memory. We passed an amusing hour while waiting for the onward train in reading the "Suggestions Book." No traveller to Babylon should miss this, with comments from all sorts of folk. The neighbouring dogs which "slept by day and howled by night," Ripley's "plenty of Rest House, believe it or not," and other comments by bored humorists, have created a volume which should be bound for posterity. There were numerous complaints about prices from worthy folks who expect ready-to-hand meals in the middle of the blue at London Lyons prices. We thought the four shillings each for breakfast and for lunch not unreasonable considering the difficulty of storing food, and the running charges of a Rest House which most of the year can be but scantily patronised. I don't suppose such a Rest House can ever pay its way, anyway; and after the dusty rail journey over the desert once termed the Garden of Eden, my wife was overjoyed at finding running-water and a full sized bath. Hot water gushed out of the cold tap—but then we never expected anything else in that climate.

The only charge at which I did jib, was the fixed rate of 15s. for the taxi for the six-mile return journey to Babylon. But it was explained there was a bridge toll before the taxi got to the Rest House, and the rate was fixed because certain keen archæologists went out and kept the cars waiting most of the day during their visits to the ground—a very different pair of shoes from a couple of tourists driving there and back again after an hour's stroll around. These prices are fixed, however, and the taxidriver looked quite mournful and sorry for us when he explained the position—most Arabs are instinc-

tive psychologists I believe ! But his car was a good one, and, much to our surprise, a latest model Chevrolet. With an increase in the tourist traffic at the present rates that driver should soon own a Rolls or a Daimler !

We couldn't find Babylon. At least I couldn't see it when I was standing on top of it. That is not surprising for there is precious little to see. "When shall we arrive?" I asked after walking for some time. "You're there now!" was the reply. Our adopted guide added, "But you shouldn't come here to see Babylon. It's all been taken away by the German diggers to Berlin !" But the museum grabbers have left the famous Lion of Babylon, the only complete piece, apparently to mark the site !

Never have I seen such real desolation. One might have been on the top of a some great rubbish shoot of a big municipality. This is not mere irreverence, for having read about that wonderful and mysterious race, the ancient Sumerians, I had properly prepared my mind to be duly impressed. My imagination was well filled with glowing pictures of ramparts, "mountain high" ruins of palaces of ancient Babylonian kings, remains of hundreds of gates of shining bronze, "giant bulls of bronze work clothed with white marble", the Sacred Way paved with engraved sandstone blocks, Hanging Gardens, and other four thousand year-old glories from this one time world centre with an area reputed by some to be about two hundred square miles. But the prophecy of the Bible has been so completely fulfilled in the case of this ancient city, that I make no apology for quoting in full :—

**"I will make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water ; and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of Hosts. "**

It was said of Babylon in the days of her glory that "everyone that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished." Nothing more appropriate could be said now, for this must summarise the reactions of most visitors today. A few

crows and kites circle overhead, and round about on the khaki landscape there was no sign of any form of life excepting withered camel thorn. No villages, no water, no crops. Nothing but dust and desert. Yet here was once the foremost city of the age, the centre of the civilisation believed to be man's oldest. Here lived the great law-giver—Hammurabi, contemporary with Abraham. His code of laws inscribed in cuneiform characters on black basalt is now in Paris. A copy may be seen in the Babylonian room of the British Museum. How astonishing that this code gave the world laws for business transactions, legacies, relationship of servant and master, even punishment of bribery (an ideal forgotten now in the East !), sale of land, and thousands of other details in its eight thousand words. And how amazing that this is still the basis on which modern law-givers base their intricate structures. How advanced and complex must the Babylonian civilisation have been. What intellect these dusty mounds must once have sheltered.

“I wonder if London or New York will ever look like this,” said my wife, bursting in on my reverie.

I wonder ! To see modern Babylon makes one think furiously.

Another Arab appeared on the horizon, and our guide looked uneasy. Not another soul was in sight. The Arab came alongside, a repulsive looking fellow carrying an ornate and business-like knife in his sash. I wondered why he was leering, until I realised that was his natural expression. What a treasure for a film producer who might have spent hours trying to make up a face like that. I gathered the second man did not know English, for our guide insulted him openly by murmuring “Very bad man. Send him away”—and dramatically drawing the side of his hand across his own throat—when the new-comer didn't see him. My wife looked nervous. But after following us about for some time, Abdul the Bulbul became discouraged and disappeared to find other

tourists. Evidently our guide did not intend to go fifty-fifty with any baksheesh !

Some picturesquely clad Arab women appeared on the horizon, and I inspected the stop of my cine camera, ever having an eye to an honest picture. My motioning to the women to stop a moment sent them scuttling off like rabbits, with closely drawn veils to cover what I thought sounded strangely like giggles. Our guide looked at me with expressionless eyes and said it was "good they ran away." This cryptic remark I elucidated as meaning that good Arab women were bound to run away when encountering strange men in such places, and there was no particular reflection on my own character. It was just a question of good manners, even as the Indian peasant women will draw her sari more closely over her face when encountering a strange man on the road. She is just being polite to him. But from a cine enthusiast's viewpoint, determined to film a country and its peoples, most awkward. As a matter of fact, I got some of my best shots of this kind from a stationary car, seated quietly inside. I registered a mental note that a right angle mirror or a long focus cine camera lens would be very useful on such occasions.

We strolled on down the Sacred Way, and saw the remains of the Hanging Gardens—more hanging than garden. But the great Lion of Babylon was there all right, making about the one and only complete relic at this remarkable place. What a contrast to the days when, according to the deciphered inscriptions found from the ruins—

"Huge cedars from Mount Lebanon with my hands I cut down. With radiant gold I overlaid them, with jewels I adorned them. Giant bulls I made of bronze work and clothed them with white marble . . . thresholds, doorposts, cornices, wings of the doors of the gate of the shrine, I clothed with dazzling gold. With tiles of bright silver the aisles of the shrine and the path of the temple I constructed."

Thus the vast city built by King Nabopolassar and his better known son Nebuchadnezzar. One of the many conquerors of Babylon, by the way, was that world's most brilliant soldier Alexander the Great, for here he died of fever in 323 B.C. What an ending for a man who won his first battle when 16 and conquered most of the known world before he was 33 !

Most of Babylon seems to have been built of brick, though one of the few exceptions was the bridge spanning the river joining the two parts of the city, and the stone piers of a bridge may be seen in the old river bed to-day. But one finds it hard to believe that in those early years there was, as we are told, a movable drawbridge thirty feet broad on these piers ; and that the outermost wall of Babylon was 480 *stades* (56m.) which would include an area of some 200 square miles. The same authority puts the height of these walls at 335 feet. Small wonder that for many centuries (and the earliest city was built six thousand years ago) Babylon has been a mine for brick thieves. Years ago the Turkish Government even went so far as to sell to contractors the right of digging in the ruins !

Bombay residents who are rightly proud of their so-called "Hanging Gardens" on the steep side of Malabar Hill may get wrong conceptions of the famous Hanging Gardens of ancient Babylon. To please the Queen, a series of arches was built in the form of a square, some 70 feet in height, and here were cultivated trees and flowers. Water was raised by a screw from the Euphrates !

One final indication of the size of Babylon. Down to the bridge mentioned above led no fewer than one hundred and eighty roads, each with its bronze river gate. What a problem for the Babylonian Minister of Transport !

We journey on across the desert by the single track line. One gets the impression of being afloat, of having exchanged the ocean for a sea of sand. We watch for camels, still a novelty to us in a way. Occasionally a herd has a white camel,

or pretty young ones trotting bravely after the mothers. Camels look best at a distance in herds, and I can well understand the desert dweller becoming as attached to them as any dog lover is to his pet.

We reflect again that here was the probable seat of the world's civilisation, the one time Garden of Eden. Redundancy may be pardoned, for nothing but continually stressing will ever convince the traveller of it as he gazes out on this arid sea of sand and dust, uninhabited save for rare villages clinging to the railway line. I was so astonished at the thought that the first thing I did on reaching London was to hie to the Babylonian Room of the British Museum. Here I listened with renewed interest to one of those excellent free lectures on "The Story of Man." And my astonishment was revived. I learnt that this mystery race, the Sumerians, invented the fundamentals of civilisation including writing, wheels, arches in building, pillars, and other things. I gazed in amazement at those beautiful pieces of jewellery dug from those dusty mounds that I had seen under the burning sky. Lovely necklaces of gold and blue stone (pearls and diamonds being unknown then), a finely wrought little chain of which any modern jeweller would be proud to-day, a restored harp of mother-of-pearl (the earliest known stringed instrument) from the grave of a priestess buried somewhere around 3000 B.C., a little donkey, beautifully carved, also buried with her. Some of the seals are worth noting, and their impressed cuneiform writing on white plaster can still be seen very distinctly : the seal is rolled as one rolls a pencil. If the Sumerians had gone just a little further they might easily have discovered printing. Perhaps they did, and may had a wise and very farseeing King of Babylonia nipped the invention in the bud and threw the inventor into prison !

In the same room of the British Museum are those cuneiform translations which relate the story of Creation and of the Flood, besides later history, in astonishing verification

of the Old Testament. These translations are well worth reading.

At Ur very valuable objects were unearthed from these rubbish heaps. The jewellery and especially the filigree work and gold headdresses, reveal that this age was far advanced in art and craftsmanship. The finds include silver boats, beautifully made and exact replicas of those now sailing the lower reaches of the great Euphrates, elaborate wigs for noblemen with gold earrings and gold frontlets, daggers in gold and lapis lazuli, inlaid gaming boards, gold and silver ornaments, decorated toilet and cosmetic sets. In one of the royal tombs of Ur where a king and queen were buried about 3500 B.C., no fewer than sixty skulls were found lying in order just as the unfortunate retainers had stood around his tomb : and suggesting the practice of human sacrifice at the time of burial of the great ones of the earth. A whole chariot with the skeletons of the men who drove and the oxen which pulled were also in the grave. Here is the same underlying idea that exists in many other civilisations—the departing spirit must be provided with those things it may need on the other shore.

As one sees some of these relics in the museums in London, Baghdad and Berlin, one may well feel with Miss Gertrude Bell the “lavish cruel past” rushing in on the mind. “The myriad soldiers of the Great King,” she wrote in *Amurath to Amurath*, “transported from the reliefs in the British Museum, marched through the Gates of Assur ; the captives, roped and bound, crowded the streets ; defeated princes bowed themselves before the victor and subject races piled up their tribute in his courts. We saw the monarch go out to the chase, and heard the roaring of the lion, half paralysed by the dart in its spine, which animates the stone with its wild anguish. Human victims cried out under nameless tortures ; the tide of battle



raged against the walls, and, red with carnage, rose into palaces. Splendour and misery, triumph and despair, lifted their head out of the dust."

It would be very easy to become deeply interested in the history of the Sumerians, and I would suggest the traveller should do this before and not, as I did, after visiting Babylon. Nothing will then stop him from going on to the other ancient cities—Kish, the first city founded after the Flood, Ur of the Chaldees, birthplace of Abraham, Assur, most southerly and oldest and most sacred of all the cities of the Assyrian Empire ; and places like Arbil (near Kirkuk), the only Assyrian site still inhabited. In fact, not only is it still inhabited but it has retained through all these centuries its ancient name Four Gods. It was to Nineveh what Canterbury was to London in the Middle Ages. Below the mound lies the famous temple of Ishtar, identical with Astarte or Ashtaroth of the Bible, the great mother-goddess of all Nature and synonymous with the Hindu deities of reproduction. Near this place was fought the battle of Arbala, where Darius the Persian made his last stand before the victorious army of Alexander the Great. All his vast treasure, I read, was left in the now ruined citadel, under the mound upon which the present town is built.

Our study of these places is interrupted by the train pulling up. We have been running through greener scenery—what a relief at long last. Better houses, better dressed people, roads, real ones . . . not tracks across the desert . . . water, sheets of it, not oases' pools . . . a big river and a bridge . . . even a palace or great residence across the plain.

Yes, we must be running into Baghdad, City of the Caliphs. "Baghdad West" says the platform. "Your rooms are reserved at the Maude Hotel," says Mr. Tommy Cook, looking for all the world like Harold Lloyd and peering over his glasses through the carriage window.

Baghdad ! Let me here quote from Mr. Richard Coke's

*Baghdad, the City of Peace*, assuring the traveller it is now essential to his enjoyment that he should read this book sometime :—

“ Few cities of first rank have undergone so many or so violent changes of fortune as has the City of Peace. Younger by many centuries than Athens, Rome, Constantinople, or even London, Baghdad has suffered one long succession of ups and downs, from insignificance to wealth and power, and back again to poverty. In a life of under twelve hundred years, she has served as the heart of a world civilisation, the pontifical seat of a universal religion, a provincial capital of the Mongols, a bone of contention between Turcoman tribes, a Persian possession, a Turkish colonial town, an outpost of the British Empire, and the Metropolis of a youthful Arab State . . . . . The dirty, sandy, feverishly active capital of King Feisal of Iraq, where they pull down a row of buildings in a day and re-erect them in a month ; where you may send your mail by aeroplane and travel yourself on an ass ; where hundreds of people go to see cinema pictures of events which have taken place in London two or three weeks before, and hundreds more have never even seen the Tigris ; a city of amazing contrasts between early mediævalism and the last word in modernity, an apparently hopeless jumble of the tenth and the twentieth centuries ; such is Baghdad, the City of Peace, the fabled capital of the great Caliphs, the wonder town of *Arabian Nights*, a place known to the dreams of every western child . . . Baghdad, the city of a myriad types of man, of wondrous, close-veiled, dark-eyed maids ; Baghdad, the home of a million stories of lust and cruelty and passion and achievement and sometimes even humour ; the city of the blazing sun by day, the treacherous cold and damp by night ;

what romance, what fascination in the very name, Baghdad !”

But enough ! There was not so much fascination in Baghdad for us. This was entirely due to the fact that we had arrived at the wrong time of year. I should imagine that in the Winter or Spring Baghdad can be extraordinarily pleasant. But a reference to my diary shows very scanty entries and these relate mainly to the temperatures which hovered around 115-118 degrees. There might have been some comfort in the thought it was not exactly *the* hottest time of the year, which we were assured was to arrive the following month, but for the fact that I could not possibly imagine how such weather could ever get much hotter. The Maude Hotel was comfortable enough ; both food and service were excellent, and it was pleasant to sit on the lawn by the river in the evening. But apart from this respite we felt inclined to do nothing more than stay indoors under the fan behind shuttered and curtained windows with the electric light turned on during the greater part of the day. In such extremes of temperature the most appalling inertia settles down on the human mind—at any rate on the unseasoned European mind. Transport the unacclimatised European from such heat to the cooler temperatures of a hill station and he or she will immediately discover all sorts of forgotten things which must be done, such as arrears of correspondence, etc. A sort of fog lifts and the human brain works easily once more.

On going to bed at night, sheet and pillows were found really hot to the touch, and we very foolishly kept to our room on the first night. Afterwards we joined the common dormitory on the roof where there was a pleasant breeze, and we got some sleep, interrupted at intervals by the quacking of the inevitable ducks in the water below, and the clackety-clack of the noisy Maude Bridge, as motors passed over it.

But perhaps I complain unreasonably of the heat.

We certainly had the advantage later on when we arrived in Europe and enjoyed wonderful weather. I suppose people in Baghdad get inured and adapt themselves to these scorching summers by attending office very early, and closing down during the hot afternoons. Only so is life supportable. There are several attractive places such as the Club, the swimming baths, the Museum, etc., though we were not in the mood for these. After our experiences in Bahrein, I could not but wonder why no hotel proprietor has yet reached out for the fortune that awaits anyone in refrigerating, or air-conditioning, some of his rooms in the hot weather. Who would not pay an extra charge for such a luxury—the only trouble being that once you were inside, nothing on earth would tempt you to go out again !

One interesting sight is the departure of the big Nairn bus across the Desert to Damascus, which leaves twice weekly in the early morning and does the five hundred miles journey over the sand in the remarkable timing of around twenty-four hours. These buses are the last word in luxury desert travel, having reclining seats and being air-conditioned. In fact, a friend I met in Baghdad advised me to go this way and pick up the Taurus Express in Palestine—the same train that runs through to Egypt and joins up at Aleppo. However, our arrangements were made and in any case we preferred to see the Kurdish country and Northern Iraq, as we were very tired of desert. And I think our choice was a wise one.

To the martial vicissitudes mentioned in an extract from Mr. Coke's book given above, must be added a series of natural catastrophes which have overtaken this historic city. Travellers who see the narrow streets of the old city of Baghdad and the picturesque but crowded bazaars, will not be surprised to learn that the City of a Thousand and One Nights has of times been decimated by plague. One of these epidemics about a century ago carried off fifty thousand people—and at that very moment the Sultan's army was besieging the city.

Afterwards came a flood from the river, which in one night claimed fifteen thousand people and swept away half that number of homes. Fire, riot and rebellion followed, and then treachery betrayed the city to the army outside its walls. Small wonder that the Baghdadi Arab has inherited a courage, a persistency and cheerfulness under adversity, which often amazes the visitors.

Baghdad had at one time a reputation for a dangerous water supply, which is not surprising when one considers that there was no sewerage system, the surfaces of the streets serving that purpose, and the sewage being washed down into the Tigris from which the city drew its drinking water. Recently, however, a great deal of money has been spent on a water system, and we were assured that the drinking water was above reproach. We drank it freely without ill effects. After all, to be told that water is dangerous in a temperature where you must drink some every half-hour to keep alive, is an appalling thought.

The modern part of Baghdad forms a strange contrast to the older cities, having fine broad streets, well laid out houses, and attractive gardens. One should not fail to see the very imposing statue of the late King Feisal. Larger numbers of Jews are in evidence in the North-Western area, the census recording over thirty-four thousand of them.

Nor should one fail to take a walk through the old vaulted bazaars of Baghdad, where one could very well imagine oneself back in the times of the Caliph. As in any Indian bazaar all the various artisans and tradesmen herd together, and there is the bazaar of the goldsmiths, of the silversmiths, of the money changers, and the street of the perfume sellers, etc. All these things have felt the influx of modern trade; and side by side with native wares one may buy tawdry Brummagem made in the big industrial centres of the world, and finding a ready market through its cheapness.

A good purchase may be made of one of those gorgeous

native cloaks, or silken *abas*, beautifully worked with gold and silver thread. Some of them are quite expensive. We were much attracted by some beautiful skin lampshades, rather larger than soccer footballs, and would have bought a couple but for that bugbear of travel—too much luggage! On inquiry we were informed that they were camel's bladders! But the delicately minded would never have guessed.

Emerging from the bazaars we stood on the great North Bridge while the amazing tide of humanity flowed by. Amazing becomes a somewhat hackneyed word to the traveller in the East, but the traffic over this bridge can be described in no other way. Swarthy and picturesquely attired Arabs with their dark-eyed womenfolk trotting behind, bearded and bedaggered Kurds, smartly dressed sleek Jews shining with brilliantine, "Europe returned" Arab students in smart French or English clothes and with the stamp of the West, filthy beggars calling aloud for "baksheesh," women of many races, veiled and unveiled, very lovely and extremely ugly, creaking bullock carts, gurgling camels and their driver, asses and horses, and modern bicycles made in Japan, dignified policemen, European tourists with their cameras and a dashing cavalcade of artillery which brings over a gun carriage—charging right into this great stream of humanity and galloping up the slope of the bridge at the end without touching anybody! Truly an amazing spot, and one to make for in the early morning or evening with a camera or cine-camera. The Maude Bridge at the other end of the town is not one-tenth as interesting.

On the far side of the bridge one may see the famous *guffas*. A *guffa* may best be described as resembling in shape exactly a useful but generally hidden piece of bedroom furniture without the handle. But this thought need not deter the traveller from sitting inside one and floating downstream. This is one of the things the tourist may easily do, and tea can be served in the *guffa*. This circular vessel is of

basket work, covered with bitumen and is often large enough to carry five or six horses and a dozen men. I should imagine it is almost non-capsizable, and on a large river where navigation is uncertain and uneasy it must be a most useful form of river craft. Pictures of these *guffas* may be seen on old Assyrian monuments, and equally ancient are the *kelleks*, or goatskin rafts, which often support a small cabin house. In fact, the whole subject of Tigris and Euphrates craft is an unusually interesting one and fertile in material for the photographer or journalist. It would be fascinating to sketch all river craft on ancient Assyrian and Babylonian monuments, and compare them with the collection of photographs obtainable to-day. Many would have changed but little.

After tea we hired a car to drive out to the famous Arch of Ctesiphon, twenty-five miles from Baghdad. It was four-thirty when we started, and we didn't feel really cool again until the sun had nearly set on our return journey! But we were duly impressed by this great vaulted hall, which stands out for miles around on the flat alluvial plain, and in spite of gigantic cracks from top to bottom has withstood the elements of denudation for so many centuries. We took photographs and cine film, and soon emptied half a dozen cool sodas while seated in the shade of the car. Meanwhile the local inhabitants did a little mountaineering over the top of the arch to impress us further. At this winter capital of the Parthian kings war memories rushed in on our minds. A lonely signpost said that Kut was not far away.

To the west of the ruins are big trenches where excavations have been carried on, but nothing else whatever marks the site of the one-time flourishing suburb Ctesiphon or of the famous Seleucia on the opposite bank of the Tigris. Yet what is left is worth seeing and studying for the great vaulted hall is the most splendid example of Sassanian architecture extant. It was built in A.D. 550 by Chosroes I entirely of

brick, for no stone is available on the burning plain around. The main front measures over a hundred yards, and the height is 115 feet. The great hall was said to be open in the front when built, and the crown of the vault is 9 feet thick, with the walls at the base 23 feet. The walls seem to lean forward dangerously in parts, and there has been some modern strengthening with brick and concrete.

As we returned in the setting sun, Arab shepherds were slowly bringing home their flocks for the night, and the camera was busy again with good effect. Mounted troops were on patrol—it will be a long time before these desolate places are perfectly peaceful !



### CHAPTER III.

## FROM BAGHDAD TO ISTANBUL.

RESERVATIONS—luggage—bedding—and all the other paraphernalia of travel, and once more we are moving northwards to the end of the railway line. The journey from Baghdad to Kirkuk is done in one night and my July diary notes that it was “not too hot at all.” It is pleasing to mark the slight appreciable fall in temperature for every hundred miles one goes northwards ; and it is when one gets into the foot-hills later on that the greatest difference is felt. I should imagine in the winter time the traveller would need to wrap himself up somewhat like an Esquimo in these regions. Considering the difficulties, the railway arrangements are very thorough indeed and at Kirkuk, which is the end of the railway line, a good breakfast was served in a restaurant car which stands in the station. We were then transferred to Rolls Royce cars—three passengers per car—while the luggage went into a lorry. The day’s road journey was to take us to the railway station of Tel Kocheh, to the Taurus Express. We had provided ourselves with a thermos flask of cold water for this journey—and, of course, we found it had broken ! Not that it would have been of much use with its quart of water, as we drank at least thrice that quantity per person during the morning alone. Nor need we have troubled at all for the railway officials placed in each car one of those two-gallon thermos flacons with triple lids. A very good thing to carry, by the way, is a canvas *chagul*, which keeps water cool and aerated, and when empty can be kept flat in a suitcase.

I see I have made a note of the breakfast menu in my diary—a gargantuan kidney omelette, surrounded by fried liver, fried sausages, fried tomatoes, and other titbits, which leads me to the reflection that the one thing the traveller should be really thankful for all over the world is the egg. Where you can obtain practically nothing else, you generally find

the egg, and the fact that it can be cooked in so many ways and so quickly advertises its own age so boldly, makes it nature's greatest gift in "the blue."

The town of Kirkuk rises rapidly out of the morning mist on our right, and it is sad to think there was no time to view these 3,500-year-old ruins of Tarkalan. The town is built on a hill which is said to be the debris of many previous towns, and goes back to biblical times. Our driver settled down to business and I expected the asphalt to disappear from sight when we left Kirkuk. I was mistaken. This dustless road continued (thank heaven) right up to Mosul, where we halted for a midday rest and meal. We passed little traffic and the road, considering the country, was surprisingly good—much better in fact than the main road from Bombay to Poona, though that would not be difficult! We soon left behind the flat plains of Iraq, and entered the undulating country which forms the foot-hills of Kurdistan. (I am using the term Kurdistan in its wider sense as the land of the Kurds, and not referring to the Province of that name in Iran.) Our travelling companion was an English lady going home from an oilfield outpost of Iran. She was able to tell us something about oil, and the occasion was just right, for the whole countryside stank of it.

Once or twice we saw great fountains of flame rising high into the air on our left—"burning off the waste oil" we were informed. The countryside became greener and one could picture it carpeted with wild flowers in the Spring. Sand grouse called all round and for some miles we were accompanied by so many thousands of them overhead that the sight might have been a sort of sportman's dream. I never imagined there were so many sand grouse in the world as I saw on this journey, and I expect the local Kurd seldom goes hungry.

We saw a good deal of the Kurds on this journey for we had completely left behind the Arab country. During our

numerous halts they gathered round the car and seemed quite friendly, which was just as well. Since they all went armed, some with ornately decorated daggers, others with rifles across the pony saddle. Their thousands of sheep which we saw had fine pasturage in these foot-hills. How these wild and lawless Kurds managed to carry so much clothing was a mystery. They seemed to be out for the week-end with all their luggage wrapped around them, and in type looked much like the trans-frontier Pathan on the borders of India. Yards of black, or colourless, material were wrapped round the waist, this presumably being their bedding. This material formed a convenient receptacle for odds and ends, and for the inevitable dagger. Stories are current of Kurd brigands attacking cars, but it is comforting to think these Dick Turpins chiefly delight to take valuables and clothing (sometimes every scrap of it) but not life. However it would certainly be distressing to engage in compulsory "strip-tease" on the highway to Mosul in the cold weather ; or even in the hot weather in mixed company ! However, the Kurds we met in village coffee houses and on the wayside seemed very friendly, and submitted to the ordeal of photography and cine-photography with dignified smiles, not forgetting to collect their due honoraria.

The harvest operations by villagers were very fascinating. This country produces magnificent wheat, and the threshing is done by spreading it out in a circle and driving over it in a sort of wooden sledge, as shown in one of the illustrations. The men wear great felt hats, rather like those of the Spanish muleteers, and the women and children are comely indeed. The women did not seem to be veiled but appeared to be extremely shy. Many of the children had charge of the threshing sledges.

Probably the Kurd has a worse reputation than he really deserves. After all, it is impossible to live in a country where there are frequent blood feuds and village vendettas without

gaining a name for being blood-thirsty, and perhaps there is some germ of truth in the saying that the Kurds are left to quarrel among themselves, as otherwise it would be impossible for any Government to control them! But it is curious though that they should be so given to brigandage in a country which can produce such fertile crops of wheat and can support the thousands of sheep which we saw. One can understand the trans-frontier Pathan being a brigand, because it is often the only way in which he can support himself and his family. But this argument hardly applies to parts of Kurdistan that we saw, though it may do to the rugged mountains beyond. The Kurds are described as racially "proud, faithful and hospitable, with rude but strict feelings of honour." In this they exactly resemble the border Pathan of India. But unlike the latter, they do not make good soldiers because they are reported to have an innate dislike of military discipline.

Many of the Kurdish towns and cities are most picturesque, being built on hills with wall fortifications clinging to the hill-sides. The house roofs are, of course, flat and are not only used for sitting on, but provide storage room for grain, straw, etc.

We crossed the Tigris and entered the ancient city of Mosul, discovering a most comfortable railway rest house, with plenty of English papers and an excellent lunch. Here passports were collected and examined, and handed over to the conductor in charge of the convoy in order to save delay at the Syrian frontier further on. I have often wondered what would happen if we lost our passports and whether in these out of the way places it would be very awkward or not. Possibly it would just be a question of delay. We had now come 112 miles from rail-head, and had covered over half our journey. Life is a matter of contrasts and the fine roads of Mosul were good to look upon. We noted several ancient churches and were told that Mosul

was an ancient centre of Christianity, being still the seat of the Chaldean and Nestorian patriarchs and of the Jacobite Bishop. The city itself is a walled one, and in the eighteenth century it withstood a siege of six months by the Shah of Persia.

Nearby are two ancient mounds which mark the site of Nineveh, ancient capital of Syria. Brick thieves have removed everything, and nothing now remains to mark this historic city. The site has, however, yielded valuable treasures for various Museums, including the famous tablet which records the story of the Flood.

On again northwards. One lady we met in the rest-house described this as "the bad bit of the journey." I wondered whether she was referring to the heat or to the condition of the road. Apparently it was neither, and she smilingly related stories of bandits who had been active some time previously ! But we were assured that just now it was "quite safe." I looked down at my suit, and wondered what I should do if I were forced to go sun-bathing and join the nudists, and I caught my wife looking equally serious ! I should think it would be great fun to be a Kurdish bandit, especially if you set up in business in the role of Robin Hood or Dick Turpin, to rob the rich and help the poor, for on these roads an ambush would be particularly easy. The first man who motored after the war from England to India (Major F.A.C. Forbes-Leith) had some thrilling encounters which he relates in his book "By Car to India." He evolved a strategy of turning round and retiring when he could ; if he could not, he did what the cavalry do and charged with his car, relying on the cloud of dust behind him to upset the musketry of the bandits after he had passed.†

† A friend who has read my proofs says my book will needlessly alarm nervous lady travellers.

I hope not ! The nervous should remember that the author and journalist must have these picturesque touches, and anyway the lady traveller will be very lucky if she sees a Kurdish brigand. When the railway is built, alas, they will be no more and will have to turn into ticket inspectors and railway porters ! So I refuse to delete the brigands unless I could move them to the end of the book and London, where there are many more bandits than in Iraq of course.

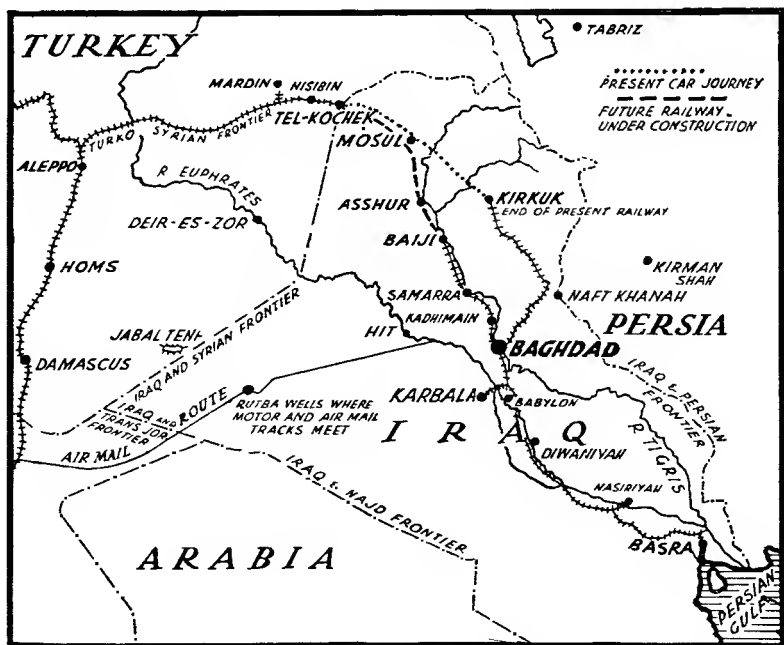
This part of the road was really very much worse than the Bombay-Poona main road, consisting of rough tracks deeply covered with dust and much rutted in parts. I should think it might become unmotorable after heavy snow or rain, at any rate, one might want chains. But one blessing was that we could leave the road almost anywhere and make a new track over the neighbouring wild. We were in the wide open spaces all right! We passed curious crowds of dignified Arabs and occasional Kurds on camels whose swayingly slow progression was in marked contrast with others of their tribe crowded into touring cars, around which luggage was hung much in the manner of a Christmas tree. An enormous amount was carried on the rear grid, and trade in car springs in those parts must have been good. The production of a car with large hat pegs all around, on which the tribal brethren herded inside could hang their innumerable odds and ends might be very popular!

After an hour or two we struck hundreds of Bedouin tents, and many Bedouins, mostly armed—some with knives or rifles, but more generally with long and slender lances. The lance is the favourite weapon of the Bedouin Arab, and from the south of Syria, whose frontiers we were approaching, this tribe is very numerous and quite warlike. It is easy to understand why these peoples must necessarily be nomadic. The nature of the country makes that inevitable. The soil of this area is not cultivatable, but provides fine pasturage for their numerous herds of camels and sheep or goats. Drought, etc., would drive them to find new pastures from time to time.

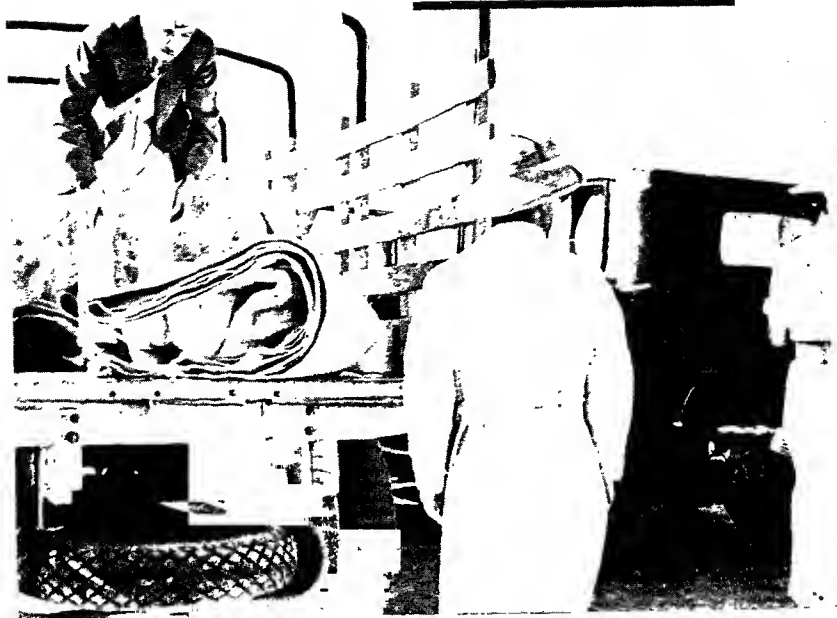
The Bedouin tent of black or brown goat hair, propped up over a couple of light poles and open three sides, is too well known to need description. I was in the act of taking a photograph when an ugly looking dog rushed along, baring his teeth and making rude noises. As he was soon joined by other similar dogs, presumably the Bedouin shepherd dogs,



*Bedouin Arabs building the Iraq railway which will join Iraq by rail to Turkey, providing the only missing link in the rail journey from London to Basra.*

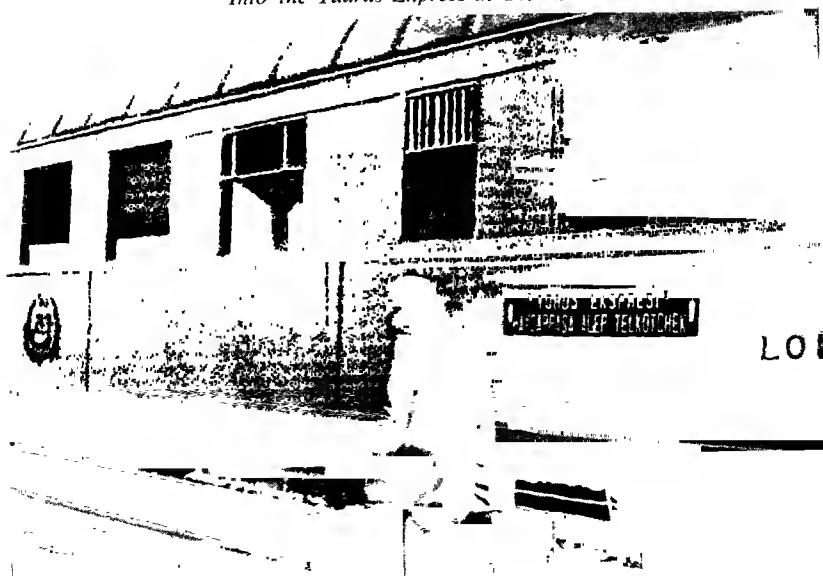


*A map showing the route of the new railway line which runs by Baiji to Tel-Kocheh*



*Off-loading luggage from the lorry at the end of the road journey.*

*Into the Taurus-Express at Tel-Kochek.*



LOI



I finished my task somewhat hurriedly and effected a withdrawal—(the military way of saying that I “beat it”).

The reason for these particular Bedouins later became apparent, and we soon saw thousands of men wielding pick and shovel. They were building the new railway line, which will complete the missing link in the train journey between London and Basra. By the end of 1938, or early the next year, this line, envisaged by the Germans during the War as the Berlin-Baghdad line, should be complete. Presumably reasons of military strategy prevented the post-war completion of the gap, for it goes through Mosul, and there is a centuries old saying that “who holds Mosul holds Baghdad.” The line does not follow the present motor route, but passes through Mosul from Tel Kocheh, and then runs southwards to join the rail extension at Baiji, and on to Baghdad along the Tigris. (See map.) Thus the present Baghdad-Kirkuk railway will not be used for the main line northwards.

Thousands of Arabs were shouting and chanting as they moved the earth, building the permanent way across the desert. Many of the railway lines in these parts were hastily constructed during the war, without metal or proper embankments and these are still in use. Sooner or later they will have to be rebuilt, for they form a brake on the speed of through trains. But here we saw something very different—a *pacca* permanent way with a high embankment, built for posterity. The engineer's tents were close by and the whole place seemed a hive of activity.

On again, for the last few miles to the Syrian frontier. Our car driver decided that he ought not to be second in the convoy of three cars and a lorry, and that his rank was first, as it had been all morning. He put his foot down and tore over the desert at a really alarming speed. Number 1 car was evidently refusing to give way. I held myself in my seat in the rear of this swaying Rolls (for we were on no

speedway!) and watched the speedometer needle climb over fifty-five and past sixty. We swayed left and right like a drunken man. The driver left the road slightly and we passed the first car with only inches to spare. A skid in the dust would have sent both cars upside down. Still holding to my seat, bumped here and there and often up to the roof, I turned to see my wife being violently carsick. But the driver seemed pleased with himself. He was again in the front of this desert cavalcade. He was a skilful driver but certainly was not overblessed with imagination.

The frontier post was surrounded by barbed wire. It provided tea, for which, amazingly enough, there was no charge. Such things come as rather a shock. It was now after five o'clock and getting slightly cooler. In fifteen minutes we slid into Syria past an aerodrome and barracks, and entered Tel Kocheh station. Here the Taurus Express awaited us. Blessed sight!

Our car drivers saw us off, and we forgave them their recklessness and tipped as was expected. It was pleasant after that hot and dusty journey to enjoy the comfort of a railway train. We found all the comfort which the reputation of the Wagons-Lits Company fully deserves. In the evenings one finds beds well made, with just the right amount of covering and an extra blanket handy in case of need.

These Wagons-Lits conductors, by the way, are among the very few people who can make beds properly. Elsewhere, hotels and pensions seem to delight in sheets, or in those "sheet envelopes" with inner blankets that one finds in Austria, which are invariably too short for the bed. Next to a lumpy bed I think most Englishmen dislike sheets which ruck up and leave the feet sticking out of the bed half way through the night! Clean towels, soap, tooth water, etc., are at hand in the cabin and there is ample space for luggage on the rack and shelves above, though nothing can be stowed below the bunk as in Indian carriages. The lighting is particularly

good, especially the blue night light and the bunk reading lamp.

Though we thought we had run away from the heat we were disillusioned, for particularly in the plains of Adana just above the north eastern corner of the Mediterranean, we found the thermometer hovering around the ninety mark. But it should be added this was a heat-wave, which even Britain and other parts of Europe experienced. When the Taurus Express runs right from Haydarpasa (opposite Istanbul) through to Basra, I imagine the Wagons-Lits Company will consider the problem of air-conditioning their coaches so that heat and dust can be excluded. Air-conditioned coaches are now on the Bombay-Calcutta run, and the extra supplement to cover the cost is such a small percentage of the total fare that I imagine most first class passengers will travel in these special coaches. Already air-conditioned trains run in America, and though they would be an inestimable boon in tropical and desert countries, completely changing the character of rail travel during the hot or cold weather, there are some general problems which are being considered from an international standpoint. I am told that one of these is the fact that windows have to be made so that they will not open, otherwise the advantage of air-conditioning might be lost. The two questions which at once spring to mind are : 1, what will happen in the event of a collision when the air supply may be cut off and the passengers may quickly suffocate ; and 2, what happens in the event of a breakdown in the air-conditioning machinery? Doubtless human engineering ingenuity will find a way over these obstacles, and, given air-cooled coaches, the journey over the Iraq deserts and other places in mid-summer should be as comfortable as on any railway in the world.

To return to our journey, which commences in the evening. As I sit in the restaurant car, I see a remarkable picture which will ever remain fresh in my memory. On the right is the

setting sun, sinking below the great horizon of the desert. In a blaze of roseate glory stretching upwards in a gigantic fan was a range of colour, varying from vermilion in the centre to purple and mauve at the edges, and changing every minute.

Below is the golden sand of the desert, broken here and there by a hillock or a green oasis. The immensity of the desert landscape seems just the right setting for the glory of a sunset or sunrise. One feels in touch with the infinite. Small wonder that poets and writers in all lands have attempted to put on paper the beauty of desert sunsets and sunrises, and to express the emotions that these scenes engender.

Into this great canvas now come wave after wave of camels, in long lines. The train glides by these waves, and I get the impression that they are waves of a great sea. Nowhere have I seen such wanton beauty. There is something uncanny in the regularity of these camels, seemingly homeward bound for some Bedouin encampment after the day's grazing.

The fan of colour above is changing every minute. I wonder if there is time to find a colour film and shoot some cine scenes. But I doubt if such delicate colour will register at sunset, and in any case in a few minutes the amethystine curtain of dusk must fall.

Still these great lines of stately camels meet the train, with a background canvas that is now changing from purple to a lovely bluey-mauve.

*Crack ! Crack, crack ! . . .*

The noise of a couple of bullets brings rude awakening from such inspiring reverie.

I put my head through the open window and glimpse from the slowly moving train two Bedouin Arabs not twenty-five yards from the line. There are two more yellow flashes and a third Arab rises from behind a little mound. Two saddled camels are waiting near by.

We are in almost the last coach and it is some seconds before I realise that the train has been fired on. There is much excitement among the Wagons-Lits restaurant car staff, who have also heard the reports. We look along the line ahead but there are no more Arabs in view. Everyone is highly amused.

At the next station, near the Syrian border and inside it, we get down and search the sides of the train. We find no bullet marks—not very good testimony for Bedouin marksmanship, considering they were so close! But the fact that I could see clearly in the daylight the large yellow flash showed that the weapons were black powder ones, probably old muzzle loaders. It would have been difficult to see marks on certain parts of the train, but no damage was reported.

It must be difficult to deal with the nomadic Bedouin on ground like the Syrian border land, but a full official report was drafted for the powers that be. The affair was quite a little diversion, and I was told it was a just a demonstration, or protest, this happening a few days after the publication of the Palestine Report, which so aroused Arab resentment.

When later I related the incident to the local head of the Wagons-Lits Company in his Istanbul office, he said with one of those smiles which can make the modern Turk so charming and courteous a companion, "But you are completely mistaken. That was not even a protest. The local people must have heard there were some distinguished people on the train, and they gave you all a *feu-de-joie*!"

But I do not think the guards I saw at the stations along the line, patrolling the station precincts with fixed bayonets, were exactly "guards of honour."

We awoke in Syria. Still in the land of camels, but here was a changed countryside with more rainfall and more pasturage and green crops. Aleppo seemed an attractive town of sunshine and gardens, neat roads and white glistening houses. Side by side with modern cars one noticed camel caravans.

On the Turkish frontier there was a little passport difficulty which might be noted by the travellers who are gaining information from this book. My passport had been given the normal Turkish *visa* in Bombay, but I was now informed I must produce duplicate passport photos for my wife and self. I hadn't any, nor did I see any way of producing them on the train! I offered to have my photo taken, or to take these portraits with my camera and present the undeveloped spool to the passport officer. Apparently there was no regulation for this unusual procedure.

However, the officials proved very helpful and eventually the difficulty was overcome.

In the Aleppo station yard we noticed a little echo of the Great War in hundreds of railway wagons all marked "Baghdad" on the side. As they could never have been in Baghdad because the line has not yet reached there, one can only conclude these were built in Germany for Turkey after the Berlin-Baghdad railway was first envisaged in 1920. We shot some film of these and reflected that in a couple of years at least, when the rail link is completed, the wagons would reach their destination.

The plains of Adana through which we passed that afternoon proved hot again. The restaurant car waiter said it "wouldn't be too hot, except at half past four o'clock." This seemed curious but his forecast was exactly correct. It may have been autosuggestion, but by that time we were well in the low-lying plains near the north-eastern corner of the Mediterranean, and exactly at half past four it did warm up. We passed through most fertile country and the luxuriant crops and market gardens were good to see after being for so long in the arid desert. But the heat was of short duration, and we soon began climbing the foothills of the Taurus Range. All around was fine Turkish tobacco—we had just passed Yenice. After an hour we were gazing at some of the finest railway scenery in the world.

The Taurus has a charm of its own. Less verdant, more rugged than the Alps, the grey and barren mountain side rises into a clear blue sky ; and falls below to the swiftly running river, tumbling through cascades along riverine meadows whose lushness frames happy Turkish children : railway expresses are sufficiently uncommon for them to wave cheerfully to the passengers. Later on, the Taurus slopes become clothed with never-ending firs, ascending so steeply into the blue that we have to screw our necks around and out of the carriage windows to glimpse again the brilliant blue above. The evening sun lights the peaks as a theatre spotlight, while the rest is deep green, almost blue in parts. Sometimes great gorges appear below. There is a fierceness about the Taurus scenery which scours it deeply within the memory. Tunnels cut through these gorge sides—the Taurus line is certainly a marvel of German railway engineering ingenuity.

The train halts. Everyone gazes out at right angles to the railway line, and out come all the cameras.

Here are the famous Cicilian Gates, through which Alexander the Great marched east long ago. The light is just right for photography and we shoot some cine film. The gap in the great ridge forms a remarkable defile, even at this distance of a mile or so standing out from the landscape like any great natural phenomenon. Local legend strongly avers that Alexander and his men cut this gigantic gap through the rocky ridge.

I asked a Turkish fellow traveller if he thought this true. He shrugged his shoulders expressively and pursed his lips, asking, "What do *you* think ? Look at it !" And his eyes added mutely, "Even Kemal could not have done it !" If the world's greatest soldier *did* cut these "gates" then he must have been also the world's greatest engineer. But he might easily have improved a natural defile.

It is cool at last as we speed along through this delightful scenery. The thermometer must have dropped to sixty-five,

and we breathe deeply the cool air, the first we have had since that delightful trip to Matheran some months ago. I wonder what the temperature actually is, but even if I consult the little thermometer which is beside the map in the train corridor I cannot tell you. It is in Centigrade and I never can remember the not too simple formula for conversion into Fahrenheit. But we feel the freshening of brain and body which comes with such a drop in temperature. We want to take a walk, and go along the length of the train. The cosmopolitan crowd in such a train never ceases to interest me.

Ankara. The morning sunlight the next day shines yellowly on this new capital city, the home of the Turkish President. He has given to his state an up-to-date city where the young Turk can more easily forget the misrule of the Sultans, where all the reactionary customs and Islamic traditions may the more easily be submerged in a wave of progress. The railway station is not yet complete. The capital is still growing, a dream for the lover of modernistic architecture. Within a decade a sandy wilderness in summer—with mud in winter—has been converted into a beautiful city, with parks, fine roads, statuary, big colleges, hospitals, waterworks, factories, etc. Here one might be in modern Germany, for most of the architects were Austrians or Germans. There is little trace of the old village of Angora, except here and there a poor Turkish homestead which contrasts strangely with the modern surrounding flats. I am told it was a source of sorrow to the more patriotic Turks that their capital should lose its Turkish architectural character, looking as though it had been imported, half from New York and half from Berlin. They wanted something distinctively Turkish, without being reminded too much of the old city of seraglios and mosques and palaces. But the few first buildings which were built in original Turkish style proved so hideous that the Government abandoned the idea.

Turkey is now an Asiatic rather than a European power, and her Asiatic capital is certainly more suited to her adminis-



trative needs. Incidentally, far less vulnerable! The town is neatly divided into industrial, commercial and residential sections, planned cleverly to allow for expansion. Most of the town lies at the foot of Tchankaya Hill, on whose slopes are the foreign legations and embassies. On the crest, dominating the entire town is Kemal's spacious villa, and below this the administrative buildings.

The amount of modern statuary to be seen in the streets, the busts of Kemal in the buildings, and his picture in every home (this is no literal exaggeration for I have never seen a shop, office or home without it) are items of significance. We must go back a little here to explain the Islamic decree that the human form must not be put on paper or tablets of stone. The Prophet had good reasons for this edict, but with the passage of time and growth of education these reasons no longer exist. His religion was surrounded by others associated with Hindu gods and goddesses, Christian figures, etc. Islam had to be kept pure, and the Prophet therefore decreed that there must be no representation of the human figure. The tourist will soon discover the Islamic objection to being photographed in many Mohammedan countries even to-day.

As with the first attempts to abolish the fez, purdah and the Arabic script, Kemal soon found that mere edict was not enough. The religious traditions in any country are firmly imbedded in those inhibitions of early years from which we never entirely escape. So Kemal had paintings, portraits, and statues or busts of himself erected at every possible point. In streets, buildings, homes—everyone now knows exactly what their President looks like, though they may never have set eyes on him (which is unlikely for he moves about a great deal). The modern Turks followed his example, and it soon became the fashion to have portrait busts, and to pose for paintings or photographs. The statues of Kemal Attaturk to be found in Ankara and all over Turkey are no

mere index of a colossal vanity : they merely represent the very clever personal method by which an old and useless tradition is being broken down.

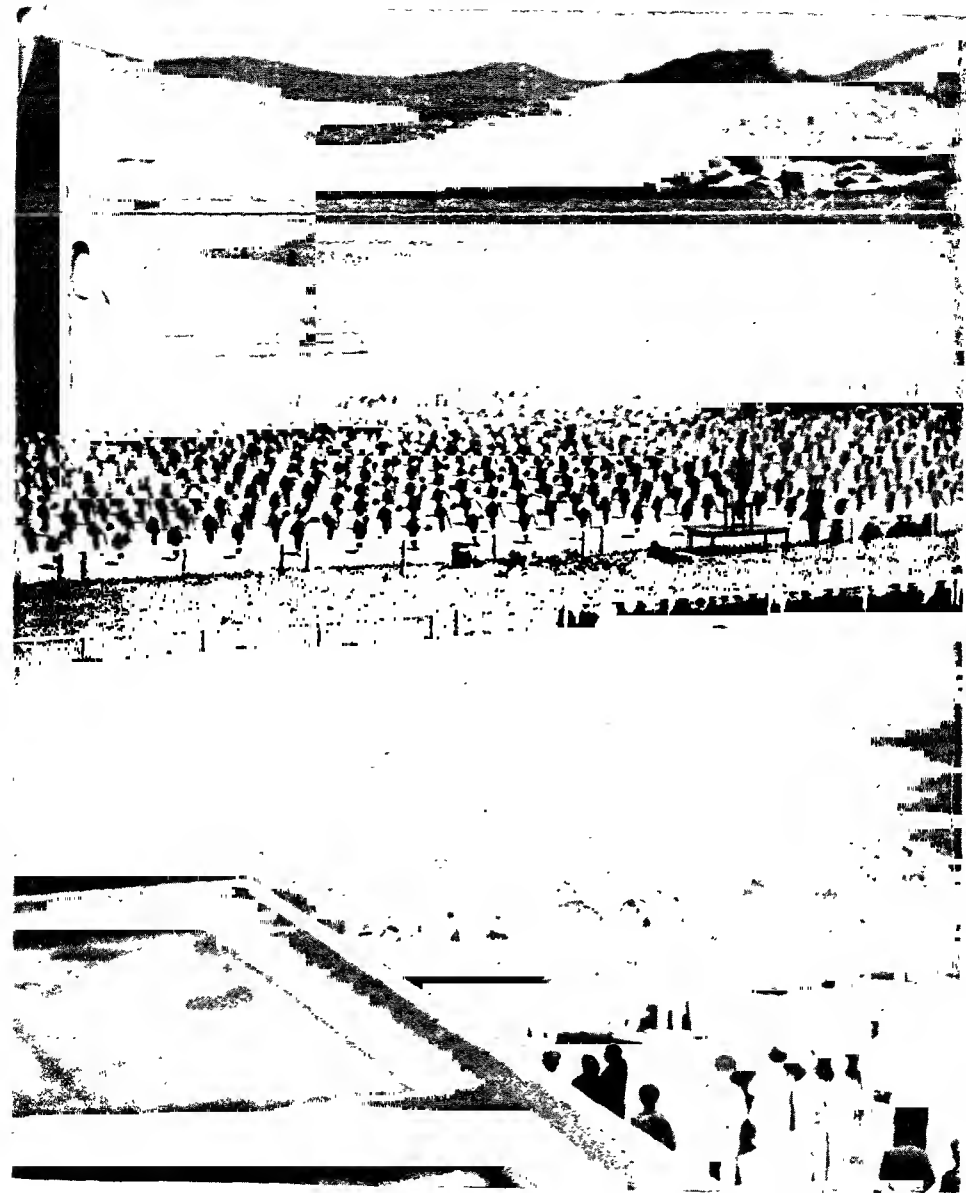
As an indication of the strength of this tradition I may recall an incident in Bombay connected with my own paper. A dispute arose in the Bombay Corporation some years ago about the exhibition of certain pictures of female Moslem saints in the Prince of Wales' Museum, Bombay. Not only had these paintings been exhibited for some years without anyone objecting previously, but they belonged to a well-known Mohammedan art connoisseur, Sir Akbar Hydari. I felt they would provide pictures of interest for the paper, sought and received official permission for copying them, and published the female saints. The result surprised me. Protests came in from many parts of India, and I received more than one deputation of very orthodox Mohammedans urging me to publish an apology for my sinfulness. Yet the pictures had been on view for years in a public art gallery, and there was nothing in the least objectionable about them—the female saints were seated completely veiled on the lawn under a tree, and were beautifully painted in the traditional Moghul style.

A still stiffer reform must have faced Mustapha Kemal in the abolition of the *purdah*, which is now banned by law. Women—the younger ones at any rate—were quick to emerge from the black *charsaf*. Most of them must have felt like butterflies coming out of the chrysalis stage, though the menfolk protested, and still do, for financial reasons explained in another chapter ! In modern Ankara girls and boys learn together, for co-education is the order of the day. They learn the Roman alphabet, and Kemal has given orders to philologists to compile a comprehensive new Turkish dictionary, finding new Turkish words for the existing Arabic and Persian ones. The Turkish people themselves engage keenly in this hunt for new words through the columns of the popular press.



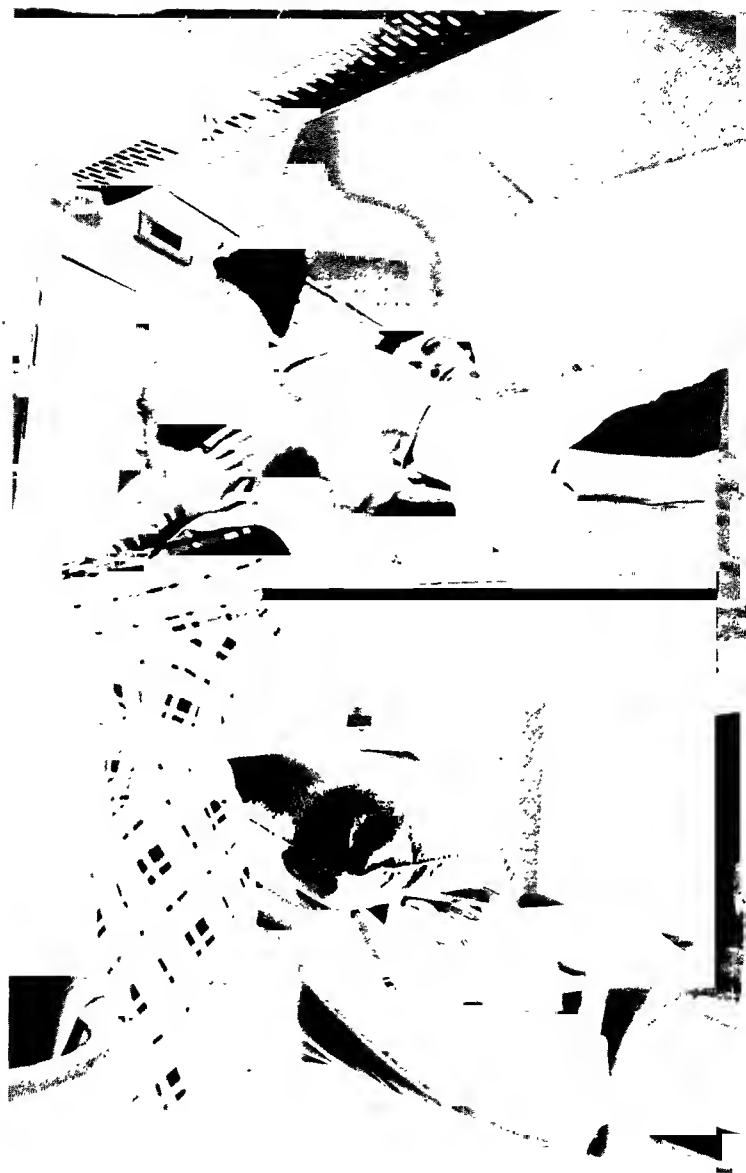
Photo officially supplied.

*A partial view of the new town of Ankara.*



*A big sporting gathering at Ankara.*

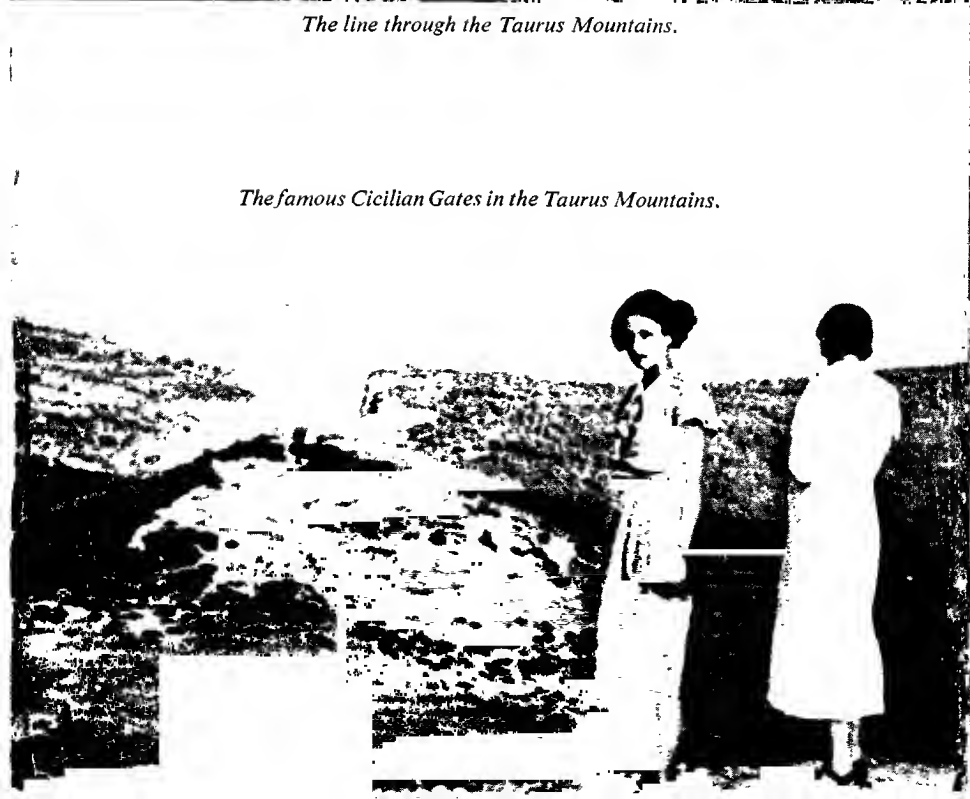
Photo officially supplied.



*Inside a sleeping compartment in the Taurus-Express.*



*The line through the Taurus Mountains.*



*The famous Cicilian Gates in the Taurus Mountains.*

The schools and colleges of Ankara are equipped with every modern improvement, and in ten recent years the number of girls attending elementary school increased sixfold. Domestic sciences are very popular, and in the great Ismet Inonu Institute in Ankara a girl can learn almost everything she will need to know—sewing and dressmaking, millinery, cooking and household management, nursing and infant hygiene, etc.

The great College of Agriculture is impressive and an indication of Turkey's determination to improve her lands. Spacious grounds hold twenty separate buildings, and there are practical demonstrations in dairy work, veterinary surgery, fodder problems, etc. There are laboratories for experiments in chemistry, physics, and meteorology.

Asia Minor is rich in minerals, which may be one of the reasons why the Germans set such store by this railway line. On the train we met a paleontologist, an American lady whose services were employed to apply this science to the practical needs of Turkey. She was enthusiastic about the progress of modern Turkey, and her one regret was that Ankara was so expensive. For a small apartment she mentioned a figure which might have been equalled in crowded Bombay or Mayfair. But probably these problems will be solved in time.

Nowhere is the fez to be seen. It has gone the way of purdah and other relics of the Turkey of the Sultans. Yet the fez was a great and universal religious emblem, and when the hat was first introduced, the caricatures which were published in the popular press were significant of the public distaste for this ridiculous headgear from the West. Here again Kemal's personal example was able to overcome these prejudices. The big parade when he wore his bowler hat was an epoch-making day for Turkey.

As the Taurus Express drew out of the busy Ankara station, we noted the many barracks and aerodromes of the

capital. Curious eyes gazed at me as from the Restaurant Car I prepared to make a few cine shots. I recalled the warning that no pictures might be taken of military defences of places, and that the results of a breach of this rule might put me to "considerable personal inconvenience!" I hastily put away my camera and enjoyed the passing scenery. Turkey is very espionage-minded.

The rail journey that day to Haydarpasha, near Scutari, was full of interest. The scenery was worth watching, and most of the way we ran alongside a beautiful river. It was harvest time and folks were busy in the fields. Much remains to be done to improve the low standard of living in these parts if the rural homesteads are any index of their conditions. They were poor and small, except near the towns, and contrasted strangely with the smart urban seaside resort on the Sea of Marmora which we passed after tea.

The evening crossing by ferry steamer to Istanbul occupies only a few minutes, and is cheap. There is also a Wagons-Lits launch for those passengers who like to travel separately. It was raining hard, and I had to put away my cine camera with a sigh.

The Park Hotel at Istanbul proved a surprise. Surprisingly good. Rooms were cool and spacious, with attached bathrooms, telephones, and neat modern furniture. The view from the sort of covered garden where one eats was a "sight for tired eyes," as they say in China. The food was good and the tariff reasonable. In the hall was the usual statue of Kemal, but there was more than the ordinary reason for this, for I was told he often came here and liked the place.

That night saw us passing an hour or so at a garden cabaret, watching the young Turk at his amusements. Prices were exorbitant as we expected: they always are at such places. When you buy in Turkish pounds worth just over three shillings each, prices *sound* more exorbitant than they



are. But at any rate the cabaret was first rate, and one item of performing dogs will long be remembered. There was a snap and variety about the programme which characterises good showmanship the world over. One Hungarian band was particularly good, and the Turkish companion who was to show us the sights burst out with "That peach second from the left is sure a fizzer!" She certainly was, but the remark indicates, how quickly the modern Turk picks up the American language from tourists. I burst out laughing and the eyes of the "peach" twinkled knowingly.

Our hotel bedroom presented us the next morning with a magnificent panorama. Ignoring all the rules for cine amateurs I "panned" my film in a complete half circle, and obtained a fine shot in colour. There is so much colour in Istanbul, and so much of the charm of the city lies in its blue skies and blue waters around, that the cine enthusiast should not travel without colour film. Now we had arrived in cooler climates it was a blessing not to be perpetually concerned with the storage of colour film in the heat, for this film has the reputation of deteriorating rapidly in the humid tropics, after exposure. For this reason, I had to be constantly putting it into cold storage in the ship, on the train, and in the hotel. On some journeys where these facilities were not available, the film cartons became so hot that one might have imagined they had been taken out of an oven. Yet I took the whole lot through to Budapest with me, and sent them to Paris from there: when processed there seemed to be nothing at all wrong with them. One can only conclude that the keeping quality of this film has been wonderfully improved recently.

A day and a night we spent in Istanbul, and my one regret was that our itinerary did not permit of a longer stay. The day was packed with interest, mainly due to the acquiring of a really intelligent guide who was able to concentrate on the highlights of this historic city. I should strongly recommend longer time for the through traveller. "Istanbul is

not what it was " you will hear older travellers declare. It certainly isn't. In the fashionable streets of cyprus-framed Pera, one may see modern shops and reasonable prices. Miss Turkey goes about in the latest creations from Vienna and Paris, and one has to remind oneself perpetually in Pera that here is the city of the Sultans. I decided to film a few "Miss Turkeys" on the pavements, and found them merely mildly amused. Their obvious self-reliance and poise struck me as unusual. I wondered what would have happened to me two decades previously, when the same women, or their mothers, were inside the veil. Except for the round faces and dark lustrous eyes of the girls, there was nothing to remind us of Turkey. Even the racial dark hair was occasionally turned to a skilful platinum or that russet colour which was so much in vogue in Paris a few years ago.

Alas, these beauties drank kokteyles and danced with their boy friends !

There were some up-to-date cinemas to be seen, and curiously enough most of the films were in English. I was informed there was only one Turkish film company, but do not know if this is correct. The English talkies were said to be 70 per cent. of the whole, with the remainder French or German. If this is true it is certainly good for the spread of languages among the young generation of Turks.

Since the capital of Turkey was transferred to Asia the population of Istanbul has naturally fallen considerably. Probably this explains why rents are fairly cheap. After an examination of hotel tariffs generally, which seemed to me on the high side compared with other European capitals, I wondered if all costs were in proportion. It was explained to me that rates and other charges had forced up hotel prices to their present level, but that rents of small homes were not dear. As an example I found that the worker could get a four roomed apartment for about £5 (English) a month.



*The mosque of Soliman the Magnificent in Istanbul.*



*Blue skies and seas make a colourful setting for the city of Istanbul.*

*Dawn on the Bosphorus.*

Photo officially supplied.



An inquiry into shop food prices also showed that the modern Turkish worker is not badly placed. Here are a few typical prices chosen at random from a small shop :—

**Bread 12 for 5d. or 1 kilo (2.2 lbs.) for 3d. ; meat 1/6d. per kilo for lamb, 1/4d. for good beef, 2s. per kilo for chicken ; 2d. for a ham roll, tomatoes 4d. a kilo, melons 4d. each, potatoes 3d. per kilo, with fruit and butter cheap. Fish was 2s. a kilo for swordfish, 5s. for red mullet, 1s. for sardines, and Turkish beer was 1s. a bottle. Petrol was then 10s. for 14 litres, though the price fluctuates as in other countries. Turkish cigarettes were, of course, very cheap and good.**

Talking of food prices, we discovered up a little alleyway a delightful though small garden where Russian refugees (of whom there are many in Istanbul), served us with a fine lunch for about a couple of shillings. We had the choice of several good Russian dishes, and fish or meat cabobs. I did not wonder that the place was well patronised by a smart-looking crowd.

The tide of Western influences, which for years has lapped the old Constantinople, has almost completely taken away its touch of the Orient that formerly attracted tourists. Though the city of mosques and minarets remains, one misses the pavement footblacks and the coffee vendors, and other picturesque touches which formerly characterized this city. But much remains, especially in the region of that great labyrinth, the Covered Market. A visit to this remarkable place should not be missed. Its cool and darkened bazaars embrace some thousands of shops of all kinds, and the curio hunter can pass many an hour here. Old-fashioned scissors, old Turkish clocks of all kinds and sizes, rugs, jewelled daggers, are all offered at various prices, but one has to be good at bargaining and know the prices, as when shopping anywhere in the East. There is also a large quantity of very fine jewellery which Russian refugees brought with them during the Revolution. "The law forbids me to export. This diamond

ring is worth at least £80 in London or Paris. You buy it for £30, Sir" . . . . .tempting, but not quite tempting enough in a Covered Bazaar ! The bazaar shopkeeper likes to do business at leisure, and the shopper must be prepared to sit down in some cases and drink a cup of coffee. As in any other Eastern tourist centre, the bazaar shopkeepers will proudly display letters from former customers in your own country.

There are numerous places where the picture hunter may obtain good photographs or cine shots. Galata Bridge, and its neighbouring quay are among these, and other spots are the streets of old Istanbul in the neighbourhood of the Covered Bazaar. Inside the bazaar there is insufficient light for this purpose even with a modern lens, allowing for the fact that one must work at instantaneous speeds to get the best photographs.

We were of course taken to Santa Sophia, that "jewel box" which every tourist is bound to see. Its squat and massive exterior, with its central Byzantine dome, looks like nothing so much as a heap of giant mushrooms, surrounded by the four minarets which were added by the Turks when the famous church became a Mohammedan mosque after they captured the city in 1453. The church goes back to the sixth century, and though the exterior is disappointing, the interior is gorgeously beautiful. The vast dome is worth studying for it is supported on a descending series of half domes, so cleverly constructed as to cover an enormous area of clear floor space. The construction of the dome also successfully resists the enormous outward thrust which would otherwise result, and which in this case is also countered by masses of buttresses on the outside.

What is called the Blue Mosque should also be visited, and in the outer doorway of the great courtyard one may see a great chain hanging a few feet above one's head. I was puzzled by this as it was certainly no essential part of the

structure and no ornament, to say the least. Our companion noticed my gaze and explained "That is to prevent camels from walking in." In another mosque where I saw a similar chain in an Eastern camel-less city I was told "The faithful touch this chain as they come to worship." Anyway, the old camel caravans of the Ottoman Empire are now fast yielding to the lorry and motor bus. Photography is permitted in the region of this mosque, which is well worth exploring, the graceful minarets towering towards the blue sky with infinite pictorial possibilities. Inside there is an elaborate mural and ceiling decoration on orthodox Islamic lines ; even if the traditional Islamic artist were not allowed to portray the human form, he found ample scope for his art in the numerous conventional designs and arabesques which grace such buildings in the East.

From here we went to that more utilitarian building, the General Post Office, where I had been requested by a friend to obtain two complete issues of airmail stamps—one to be placed on the envelope outside and one sent inside. However, when I sought to register the letter, after carefully sealing it, I was told over the counter that I must show what was inside! When I revealed the stamps, I was glared at and the official asked: "Don't you know that you mustn't send Turkish money out of the country?"

I confessed my ignorance and immediately came up against one of those regulations to be found all over Central Europe, where countries are trying to prevent the export of money.

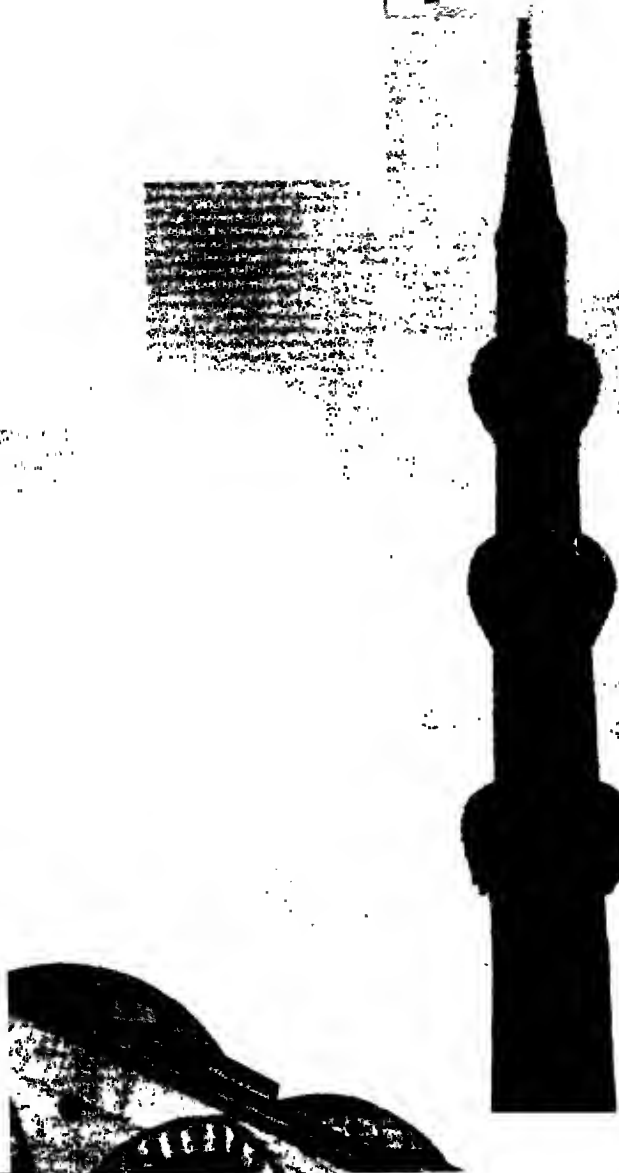
I pointed out that the stamps in the envelope amounted to only about a few shillings in value, but this did not alter the regulation. I was unable to enclose the stamps and had to take them out of the country and send them from Budapest. It must be extremely hard for any Government to stop money from going out, and the regulations seek to block every loophole.

However limited time is in Istanbul, one should not fail to visit the old palace of the Sultans, which is now a great show place. But be prepared for a long walk for the area enclosed inside these great walls is a vast one. The palace was built in those spacious days when the ruler surrounded himself with not only his administrators and his personal retainers, but his army and other folks. Which all explains why the kitchens alone might take hours to inspect, for the *chefs* in the days of the Ottoman Empire had to cater for many thousands. The kitchens of a great hotel seem as nothing compared to these vast rooms. In the reign of Murad III, the kitchen personnel numbered 1,117, and the yearly supplies included 30,000 fowls, 22,500 head of sheep and 400 of lamb. On special occasions the Seraglio might house 10,000 people, and what one sees at the present time are merely the ruins of the kitchens.

Our guide, who, by the way, said he had taken round the Duke and Duchess of Windsor during their 1936 yachting holiday, was an endless mine of information about the days of the Sultans. How accurate was his history, I do not know, but it was certainly entertaining enough, and a few details may bear repetition. Visitors who wish to study the subject before seeing the Palace, have plenty of more authentic sources of information, including the colourful pen pictures by Yeats Brown in his "*Golden Horn*."

When we met a curious looking humped-back dwarf with a face as round as the setting sun, he was introduced as one of the eunuchs of the ill-fated Abdul Hamid II. Later he was apparently promoted out of the harem to a sort of court jester. He should have made a good one, for one had only to look at his little figure surmounted by the pumpkin like head and tiny eyes to burst into hearty laughter, were politeness not to be considered. What tales he might have told! I asked the guide whether no enterprising journalist or author had as yet got hold of him to "write up" all





*Istanbul—minaret study.*



*The entrance to the Old Seraglio described in these pages.*

*Chain over the doorway of the mosque mentioned on page 63.*



the secrets that his funny head must have held. Our guide assured me that he himself had tried, and entertained the little man very freely with all sorts of drinks—but he would not talk. I could not but admire the little eunuch's loyalty to his old master.

By the way, when the Duke of Windsor as King visited the Seraglio during his 1936 holiday, he was allowed to inspect the whole of the harem, including the private rooms, or cubicles, of the eight hundred former residents. These little cells, for that is what they resemble, are not generally open to the ordinary visitor except by special permission; and I am told one may see such gruesome relics as chains, the plaited whip and the piece of wood over each door to which erring ladies might be tied, much as miscreants were placed in the stocks in England years ago!

We enter a beautiful garden, and I hear our guide giving my amazed wife as an account of the tortoise races something as follows. "The job of selecting from the harem a new bride for the Sultan's marriage each Friday night proved a very difficult one. You can imagine the intrigues and jealousies which an arbitrary choice of brides would provoke among these high class ladies of the harem."

"Were they very high class?" I asked.

"Oh, certainly, Pasha (a pleasant sounding title given by the discerning guide to the tourist, but one for which he will have to pay a little extra!)—it was considered an honour to be in the harem, and the girls were not only extremely beautiful but they frequently came from very well-known families, often given as presents to obtain some royal favour. Anyway, the Sultans formerly hit upon very good ways of selecting wives. One of these was to paint the names of the 'finalists' on the backs of tortoises who were then entered for the great Matrimonial Stakes. All concerned, including the ladies themselves, would line the course for this very entertaining race meeting."

Around the corner, and below a very beautifully decorated verandah and window, was a small ornamental lake. Here we heard stories of how the Sultans celebrated certain festival days by throwing coins to their retainers in the water. We peered into the stone basin and saw a few Turkish piastres at the bottom. Someone had evidently been emulating the Sultans on a very modest scale. Close by was another very beautiful and smaller ornamental lake, which is pointed out to all tourists as the place where the ladies of the harem would disport themselves in the water—while presumably the Grand Vizier, or the Grand Eunuch, rejoicing in the title of the Guardian-of-the-Gates-of-Felicity, in the building above kept a watchful eye for the next Friday night's bride.

It was the custom many years ago at the termination of the fast of Ramzan (an occasion of great rejoicing all over the Islamic world) for the Queen Mother to make a special present to the Sultan. The present formerly took the form of a young virgin who had to be of surpassing loveliness. Special agents ransacked the whole of Circassia and Georgia for this selected damsel, whose price soared to a fabulous height. Anyway, a man who had to live with the thought that half his predecessors died sudden and violent ends deserved a little recreation to bring forgetfulness.

The State now looks after the many former wives of the Sultan—at least as many of them who care to go into the Government Home near their former magnificence. Here they live, mingling with the crowds in the streets sometimes, their former loveliness unveiled by the march of time for all the world to see—they who formerly saw none but the *agas* or eunuchs, and the Grand Seigneur !

But many of these former wives are happily married, and I read that others became police-women, cinema stars—one of the most famous beauties now makes a good salary by exposing her erstwhile hidden charms to Turkish film audiences,

—saleswomen, secretaries, shop assistants, etc. Modern Turkey has absorbed them into its fuller life.

It was entertaining to listen to these and many other stories as we moved about the Palace apartments. Spacious marble bathrooms where the Sultan was massaged and bathed were more than usually interesting. At one end of the room were beautifully carved little marble cages, and we wondered idly who went into these.

The Sultan's Hall of the Baths, as it is called, was always beautifully designed and constructed in each of the Palaces. When viewing the veined Egyptian alabaster in Moorish style with colonnades and pillars studded with crystal, one could picture these old rulers surrendering their great frames to the skilful manipulations of the *tellaks* or masseurs, surrounded by a cloud of perfumed vapour. From above came the gentle rain of rose water. It was in such a place that the last of the Ottoman Rulers took his milk baths, and had his loose and flabby flesh rubbed with unguents in an effort to regain his lost youth.

There was an old superstition in the East, by the way, that no man can die while the house he is building remains unfinished—which may explain why the Sultans always took particular care to have some palace or addition to a mosque, etc., in the building.

The large and airy rooms of the harem are all open to the visitor, who will be shown chambers favoured by certain Sultans. The long and comfortable divans all around in some of these rooms would hold about fifty or sixty people—with a special seat for the Sultan in the corner—a pleasant enough place to spend a hot afternoon in lively company. A romantic setting for the visitor with imagination.

“Was it true that after the wives fell from favour, they were turned out or dropped into the Bosphorous?” asked my anxious wife.

“Certainly not !” replied our historian. “They were

very well cared for here—or they might sometimes be given away as presents.”

Probably a more authentic history of the Sultans is given by the French writer, Theophile Gautier, in his book “Constantinople of to-day,” a translation of which in existing English, under the same title, was published in the middle of the 19th Century by Robert Howe Gould, M.A., (David Bogue, 86, Fleet Street, London, E.C.). This book includes a very graphic picture of the Sultan going to the Mosque :—

“In a few steps, taken with extreme slowness, rather as if gliding than walking—the steps of a god or a phantom, moving by other than the usual human process—Abdul Medjid crossed the space which separated the door of the mosque from the mounting-block of marble ; following the strip of black upon which no one save himself presumed to tread ; and seemed rather to sink than to mount, to the saddle of the horse which stood awaiting him, immovable as a sculptured steed. The great (and large) officers raised themselves, somewhat more laboriously on to the backs of their respective animals, and the procession began to move towards the palace, amid loud cries of ‘Long live the Sultan !’ shouted out in Turkish by the soldier with genuine and unmistakable enthusiasm.

“By quickening my pace a little, I was enabled to pass before the cortege, and place myself somewhat in advance, in a position to gain another view of His Highness. I gave my arm to a young Italian lady, who had begged me to escort her, and who peered eagerly through the line of guards to observe the features of the Sultan ; for a man who has sixteen hundred wives, is a phenomenon that interests in the highest degree the curiosity of all women.

“The Sultan—whose horse advanced slowly, gracefully arching his superb neck, like that of a swan,

and as if proud of the burden he bore—observed the stranger, and fixed upon her for some seconds his eagle eyes, at the same time turning almost imperceptibly towards her, his impassive countenance ; this being the manner in which the Sultan salutes those whom he chooses to honour ; a distinction, however, bestowed very rarely indeed.

“ During this procession, the band played a march, arranged from Turkish airs by the brother of Donizetti (leader of the Sultan’s musical staff) and blended with enough of the tambourine and the flute of the dervish, to satisfy Mahomedan ears without outraging those of Europeans. This march was pleasing, and by no means wanted character.

“ Presently, the whole cortege entered the Palace, the open gate of which gave a partial view of a vast court surrounded by buildings of modern style ; but in a moment the massive gates reclosed, and there remained in the street but a few lingering spectators, dispersing rapidly in different directions ; a few Bulgarian peasants, in their huge overcoats and furred caps, and some withered old mendicants, crouched amid their rags along the front of the walls, glowing and blazing beneath the noontide.

“ Utter silence reigned around this mysterious palace, which, behind its trellised windows, encloses so much of languor and ennui and I could not forbear to think of all the wealth of loveliness thus lost to human sight ; the marvellous types of Grecian, Circassian, Georgian, and Indian beauty, which fade there, without having been reproduced or perpetuated, by the pencil or chisel, but which should have been immortalised in marble or on canvas, and bequeathed to the loving admiration of ages : Venuses, who will never have a Praxiteles ; Violantes, without a Titian ; and Fornarinas to whom no Raphael will ever be known.

“What a prize in the great lottery of life is that drawn by the Padischa? What the deuce is Don Juan beside the Sultan? A poor seeker of low adventures—as often deceived as deceiving; pursuing lady-loves, who have had husbands and lovers—whose countenances have been seen by the world, and whose forms are known to the general eye!

“Speak to me of the Padischa! The Sultan!—who gathers only the purest lilies, the most immaculate roses, of the garden of beauty; and whose eye rests only upon forms the most perfect; never sullied by mortal gaze; forms which pass from the cradle to the tomb, guarded by sexless monsters, in those magnificent solitudes which the boldest dare not seek to penetrate; and surrounded by a mystery and seclusion which offers no scope to even the most vague desire!”

There's glamour for you! I wonder why nobody has made a really great historical film with the Seraglio Harem as a background? Think of the scenes that could be framed in the Hall of the Baths with scores of Hollywood lovelies!

The same writer in a chapter on the women of Istanbul of those days, furnishes a picture contrasting vividly with modern Miss Turkey in the Istanbul of to-day. He says:—

“To speak to a Turk of the females of his household is to commit the grossest possible breach of etiquette, and politeness. It is forbidden to make the slightest allusion, even indirectly, to this delicate subject; and, of course, all such phrases as How is Madam to-day? (commonplace as they are to us) are quite banished from conversation. The most ferociously bearded and turbaned Turk would blush like a school girl, if he heard an enquiry so outrageously improper.”

The French traveller also refers even in the middle of the last century to the “sack in the Bosphorus” idea, and says he saw by the Palace an inclined plane projecting from an



opening in the wall. This formed a sort of "shoot" as used in factories, and he relates how it was by that sudden drop that those Odaliskes guilty of infidelity, or who displeased the Sultan, were precipitated into the deep and rapid waters of the Bosphorus, enclosed in a sack together with a cat and a serpent—emblems of domestic infidelity and treachery.

Monsieur Gautier, by the way, relates how he travelled to Constantinople "very rapidly" from Paris with the mails, for he made rapid outward travel a principle so that he could return at his leisure. This speedy journey took twelve and a half days!

In one of the rooms were three beautiful carved chairs resembling thrones, carefully designed with relative sizes and placed in accordance with that "table of precedence" which the East loves so dearly. We were told that these three were for the Sultan, his mother, and his favourite wife. In the throne room were priceless tapestries, deep pile carpets and a richness of decoration which seemed somewhat oppressive. Presumably it would have fitted into the picture with a few exotic dances going on here and there. Near this room, as indeed near many of the others used for darbars, etc., were small bedrooms where the Sultan might take his ease. Practically the sole piece of furniture in such smaller rooms was a gigantic bed, high and richly decorated and covered with marvellous embroidery. Gold and silver was used lavishly in these decorations.

We passed along the special path designed to allow the Sultans to go on horseback through the grounds to the Mosque for worship. We saw the Hall of the Divan called *Kubbe Altı* (under the Dome) which was really the heart of the Ottoman Empire. From this place in the eleventh century its destinies were decided, and the decrees of war or peace issued had their repercussions all over the world.

There are many museum rooms here, and these contain priceless treasures. The gems alone must be worth hundreds of million sterling and include several world records. After one has gazed on this collection of treasure, one is told that only a percentage is on view and vast amounts remain in store. Nor is this surprising, for to Constantinople came booty from many expeditions throughout the centuries. Trophies brought by Selim I in 1514 from the Iranian Expedition and in 1517 from the Egyptian Expedition filled the Treasury with jewels and works of art. It is reported that Selim I said, "I have filled the Treasury with gold. If any of my successors fill it with copper, let the Treasury be sealed with his seal, if not, let them continue to seal it with my seal." In fact, until the day when the Palace of Topkapu was converted into a museum, the door of the Treasury was sealed with his seal.

In one of the rooms may be seen the famous Peacock Throne. There must have been more than one Peacock Throne belonging to the Mogul Emperors in Delhi, for there is, of course, another one now in Teheran. According to tradition the Istanbul Throne belonged to Shah Ismail of Iran, and was captured by Selim I after the victory of Chaldiran. The Museum authorities say it is quite impossible to doubt the origin of this throne, which is included in an inventory of the treasury drawn up before 1680. We found ourselves looking at a form of upright chair resembling the Teheran throne somewhat—I remember the latter quite well because my paper was the first to publish a photograph of it—obtained surreptitiously I believe. I longed to photograph this Istanbul throne, but my cameras had been collected, alas, at the entrance gates. Here was the second lovely and ancient throne I had seen and could not photograph, the other being the priceless golden and gem-studded throne used for the Mysore Dassera Durbars, for His Highness does not like photography inside the Palace.

The throne we were looking at in Istanbul must also have been of priceless value. It is plated with gold and covered with beautiful enamel in red and pale and dark green, overset with pearls, rubies and emeralds—mostly picked gems! I had a wicked desire to be left alone with it for just ten minutes with a hammer and chisel! The variegated hues and corruscations of the gems blend with the gold and enamel, and the Moghul artisans have taken a delight in arranging pearls in a line of the same size, all whole. There are traces of some wicked person like myself having been left alone with this throne at some time or other, for in the Treasury inventory we read that the Indian diamonds on the top of the ruby knobs of the throne were removed, and that between two plates of enamel 2,357 *dirhems* of gold were cut off!

Wherever one gazes in these rooms one sees the priceless treasures which found their way, by some means or other, to this heart of the Ottoman Empire. Near the throne, for instance, one notices a Turkish golden cradle, studded with diamonds, emeralds, and rubies. Jewelled maces, belts, clasps, daggers, and robes of state meet the eye. In the robes of state of all the Ottoman Sultans, arranged in chronological order, each detail is of the greatest interest. For instance, in the turban of the Conqueror is an aigrette of the type called *gazi* with a round emerald five centimetres in diameter. The hilt of the dagger is also a great emerald. How these men wore their turbans baffled me: that of Suleiman must have been eighteen inches high, perhaps more.

I see my diary, compiled from the information of our guide, speaks of another dagger containing three emeralds, each of 75 carats, and of a 212 carat ruby. Emeralds seemed to be the favourite gems of the Sultans, and when one considers that green is *the* Islamic colour, and that medieval superstition ascribed many virtues to this stone, it is not surprising to find such big emeralds here. Emeralds were believed to be

good for the eyesight, for dysentery, to assist women in childbirth and to preserve the chastity of the wearer.

We admired a colossal ruby and were told it was believed to be the world's largest, being a 212 carat one.

#### CHAPTER IV.

### THROUGH THE BALKANS AND HUNGARY TO VIENNA.

**T**HE Simplon Orient Express leaves Istanbul at night, whirling the traveller the following day through the Balkans—a small piece of Greece, Bulgaria and Yugo-Slavia—the following day, with Italy the next, Switzerland through the third night (alas !), Paris at breakfast time and London at tea time on the fourth evening—fourth if you count the 10 p.m. start from Istanbul as the first “evening.” It is evident at once that we are no longer in Asia. The trains are more comfortable, they are faster with shorter stops at stations, the food is better and yet cheaper, and travel is generally more comfortable than hitherto.

Each year sees minutes gained here and there on this great run, until the aggregate after some years, is a matter of hours and trains which formerly started in the early afternoons now start at night. The timings during the station halts are cut extremely fine, and the traveller who likes to stretch his legs on the platform should beware lest he get out of sight of the guard, and the whistleless express glide silently away without him but with his baggage—a distressing enough occurrence anywhere, but particularly so on a long journey such as this. A one minute halt is the express halting time for many a big station, and at other places I have counted thirty-five seconds on my watch between arrival and departure. “You have been warned !”

But who wants to rush through the Balkans and Central Europe like this ? A day here and a day there makes all the difference to the enjoyment of the journey, and even these breaks are really far too short. The economically minded may even visit Sofia and Belgrade without spending the night at either place, enjoying a half day at the former and a full day at the latter place by changing trains. We also decided

to deviate from the Simplon-Orient route which goes direct to Italy from Jugo-Slavia, and to visit Central Europe. It is easy to include Budapest and Vienna in this manner, and to go on to Germany or through Switzerland to France. The big selection of onward routes which is offered to the traveller in Central Europe need not be mentioned here. For ourselves, we wanted to go through Italy in order to renew our acquaintance with Venice, though this return south from Vienna is not, of course, the direct route. Actually, we changed our minds at the last moment, and stayed in Switzerland instead of in Italy. This flexibility of railway travel and the ability to change plans without warning is a sadly missed feature of travel by sea. But remember to give ample notice for reservation of seat or Wagon-Lit.

The stations, the crowded trains, and the countryside during the day's journey through the Balkans, were filled with teeming interests. This part of Europe must be one of the few still off the hackneyed tourist path, and is open without effort to the train traveller from the East. One can soon understand why the Balkans have been for centuries the "powder magazine of Europe." In a day's train journey one encounters almost as many races, as diverse religions, as may be seen during a long journey in India, or in a big city like Calcutta or Delhi. Turks, Serbians, Albanians, Greeks, Bulgarians, Rumanians, Montenegrins, Armenians—what a mixture! The mixture of religions is almost as bewildering, and this spiritual intermingling must play no small part as one of the root causes of all the wars which have started here. Mohammedan, Jew, Greek Catholic, Armenian Catholic and Roman Catholic! One meets the woman shrouded in purdah rubbing shoulders with girls in colourful Bulgar dresses. Here is a religious and racial cavalcade rich in contrasts, and the little cine camera was busy again.

The number of storks to be seen from the carriage windows, presumably delivering the local babies, again

attracts attention, as it had done in Asia Minor. A favourite nesting place with a couple of storks seems to be on the very top of those water towers to be seen by most of the stations. Here their gawky outlines and the ragged nests are silhouetted picturesquely against the blue sky—for we did have a blue sky and a heat wave for the rest of the journey, up to and including London. There is something undeniably attractive and homely about the stork, and small wonder legend has associated it so romantically with babies and the like.

The peasant costumes in this part of the world are another sight for tired eyes. Slowly, of course, they are giving way to more modern and less colourful dress, but as the train halts at some station or other one may often see in a neighbouring train a wonderful display of design in embroidery and jewellery. The peasant folk of Bulgaria still seem to love their gay costumes, which were seen all along the line in these richly yielding harvest fields that gave to the plains of Bulgaria the reputation of being one of the granaries of Europe. Belgrade means "white castle", a name originating from the white towers of the fortress on the cliff at the junction of the Danube and Save rivers, towering over the broad blue lake at the junction. Before Belgrade was laid in ruins during the Great War its residents used to refer to it lovingly as "the little Paris". Belgrade has suffered deeply right through the course of her history—due entirely to her dominating position on the ridge at the junction of these two rivers. Over two thousand years ago the town was a fortified post.

But the Bulgar peasant spirit is as sturdy as are those thick-set shoulders which we see tossing the wheat on to the high and long bullock cart. We still haven't got away from the universal draught bullock, that most useful of animals. Mile after mile we see them and their big carts, standing patiently between the yellow rows of corn sheaves, waiting to lead them to the thresher.

Wheat, wheat and ever more wheat. Shining and golden, long in stalk and ear, glistening in the July sunshine. Midsummer in the Balkans repays us amply for any little discomforts the heat of Iraq may have caused in the earlier part of our journey.

Noon, and a hot noon. The temperature must be in the nineties again. The bullocks have been taken out of their cart shafts and are sheltering below clumps of trees.

The train glides by a group of eight girls, all in gay peasant costume, all shoeless and tanned by their work in the harvest fields. They lie resting on the edge of their field, by a stream. Breast-filled bodices have been loosened slightly. They are neatly in line, as if some angler had laid out carefully his catch of fish, measuring one by the other. They are laughing and joking during their rest hour. Impulse prompts a wave as we go by, and all gleefully wave back.

A mother is feeding her child. The rest of the family is round about, eating under a tree. No shoes, no stockings, and tight, bright bodices. The man is stripped to the waist, brown as a berry. Harvesting is a family affair in Bulgaria. The houses are empty.

More land-girls in costume. More bullocks. More wheat, wheat, wheat.

When the harvest is good, Bulgaria is a happy country. It would be a good place for a simple rural holiday probably. I don't know why but I have always wanted to spend a day or two in that valley in the north of the Balkan Mountains where tulips, lilacs and orchids grow wild in profusion, and where great fields of roses furnish the world's supply of attar. I want to watch and to film in colour those Bulgarian peasant women in their costumes and embroidered aprons moving among the big damask roses, gathering petals. But then, I want to go to so many other places as well!

The passport official reminds us we have passed from Bulgaria and Jugo-Slavia into the plains of Hungary. Fields





Photo from M. Lorant.

*Beautiful Hungarian head-dress and embroidery in a cabaret costume.*



*Typical beauties of Budapest in national costume.*

*Where the Budapest Market lace-girl keeps her ready cash.*



are still full of wheat, full of peasants cutting their crops. I am told some of these Hungarians can spend all day wielding the scythe in the harvest fields—and not the “regulation eight hour day” either! Like some heaving summer sea their bare muscles ripple under the tanned skin as the great scythe swings round in its wide circles. The women walk behind the men gathering up the sheaves of corn. In these rich plains of Hungary lie the soul roots of the Magyar peasant. He loves his land as deeply as does the Indian peasant, probably much more so. The harvest is a great occasion for him, and his beautiful embroidery carries designs of ears of corn as its motif. Living so close to nature, his culture has given him a tremendous, an inherent, love of art. His houses, his gable-ends, his furniture, chairs, bedsteads, chests, *have* to be elaborately carved. Without such art he cannot live. His house garden *must* be full of flowers and fruit trees.

Flowers also often form the motif of those rich Hungarian embroideries which may be studied carefully in Budapest, and which are now renowned over the whole world of fashion.

Hungary is now a poor country, and the Hungarian aristocrat or peasant will both tell you so, with proud and dignified mien. It is a country of culture, art and great ideals, and one to which the whole of Europe owes a centuries-old debt for the part played in resisting the tides of invasion from the East. Many an Hungarian has his country's great history written in his eyes—a sadness and a pride on the surface, with below a firm faith that Hungary will one day rise to win back something of her former greatness.

And because Hungary is poor, the traveller sees but few of those big agricultural machines which might do in a few hours what it takes these families of peasants days of sweating toil to accomplish under the hot sun. But because of the hard toil, and the Magyar love of the open air, Hungary is able to win a name for herself in the Olympic Games, side by side with countries of much greater populations and resources.

In his excellent book "What I saw in Hungary" (Jarrolds, 12s. 6d.) which first gave me an insight into Hungarian life, Charles Cunningham tells a story which reveals in unusual measure how wedded the peasantry are to the local seignorial land system and to property rights generally. After the War, when Bolshevism broke out in Hungary, a friend of Mr. Cunningham's was taken off to prison and his house and lands confiscated. In the course of time the Red Commissioner, who incidentally lived in the Count's chateau, offered to the local peasantry the cornfields of the estate. He must have thought this was a truly communist gesture, well calculated to secure adherents to his regime. The revolution was then at the pinnacle of its success, without any apparent reason why it should not be permanent.

Imagine the surprise of the Red Commissioner when these fine peasants, who might well have jumped at this chance, replied as follows :—

"The fields you propose to give us are not yours to dispose of. If the Count offers them to us, then we shall take them. Until he does so they are his property."

Mr. Cunningham says this indicates the excellent feeling which exists between the peasantry and the aristocracy in Hungary.

As our train carries us onward, we rejoice in the sight of those fine horses which Hungary breeds. We are in the horse country, with magnificent pasture. Fine animals these, with the long necks and lithe movements of a good racehorse. The *Csikos* of the Hungarian lowland plains is a marvellous man with horses. With his long-lashed *karikas* or whip he is the cowboy of Central Europe. The visitor who likes horses should go from Budapest on one of those day trips to the Hortobagy, and listen to the thud of hoofs on the *puszta* or plain in midsummer. Older people say the Hortobagy is

not what it was. They are not referring so much to the roads and the motor coaches of tourists, but to the turning over of these pasture plains to the plough. Where Britain sadly sees arable land going down to pasture, the *Csikos* bemoans that his beloved plain is turning into fields of corn !

Budapest ! The city of Tzigany bands and rich music, beautiful buildings and lovely women, Blue Danube and golden Tokay—and a score of other highlights for which this romantic capital is renowned throughout Europe. We find ourselves at the Bristol Hotel, where meals on the embankment pass pleasantly while one watches the promenading crowd. The cooking in Budapest is universally good—that is if one does not mind rich food and cream, with other things which all combine towards the middle aged spread. In fact, the only drawback I can see to a long holiday in Hungary would be that one's figure might soon disappear. (I am writing of course for my lady readers—my own went West long ago and I cease to worry!) The Hungarian chef is particularly fond of his *paprika*, a hot but sweet plant freely used for seasoning. It must be related to the *chilli*, so beloved by the Indian cook, who would not however recognize it, for the *paprika*, with its clear green and shining skin, looks more like a banana than a *chilli*, so big does it grow.

Here is a list, officially issued by the municipal tourist authorities, of those Hungarian specialities which may be found in hotels and restaurants, along with information about tips, etc. This may be useful to the visitor who wants to study the menu for himself. No difficulty, however, need be anticipated about ordering Hungarian food as practically all the waiters in the main hotels and restaurants know English—at least most know sufficient English to translate the names of food, and a large proportion know sufficient English to talk quite fluently.

### HUNGARIAN SPECIALITIES.

**MEAT-DISHES :** Gulyas and Porkolt (meat-stews with paprika), Szekelygulyas (meat-stew with cabbage), Paprika-chicken with cream-sauce, boiled-fish with paprika-sauce, Kolozsvari kaposzta (cabbage with meat), Toltott kaposzta (cabbage with meat-stuffing), Toltott paprika (green paprika with meat-stuffing), and Fatanyeros (Various meats with vegetable trimmings). **PASTRY :** Turos causza (stringed paste, with curds), Almas retes (fine pancake, with apple-filling), and Turos retes (fine pancake, with curd-filling). **CONFECTIONERY SPECIALITIES :** Choice pastry, made by Gerbeaud and Lukacs.—**FAVOURITE HUNGARIAN WINES.** White Wines : Inarcsi, Badacsonyi keknyelu, (light wines) ; Somloi, Debroi harslevelu (linden-leaf) Leanyka, (middle) ; Tokaj Szamorodni, and Tokaj Aszu (from unpressed grapes), (heavy wines). Red Wines : Villanyi, Nemes (nobles) Kadarka, Szekszardi, and Egri Bikaver (the so-called ox-blood).—**THE HUNGARIAN BEER,** whether the pale-ale or the nut-brown variety, is equal in quality to the choicest foreign beer. **FAVOURITE HUNGARIAN SCHNAPPS:** Barack (Apricot).—**THE FAVOURITE MINERAL-WATERS,** from Budapest springs, are : Harmatviz, Kristalyviz and Margitviz.

### TIPS.

In the larger restaurants the guest is served with food by one waiter and with beverages by another waiter, and he pays his bill to the headwaiter. The tips generally amount to 10—15% of the bill total. The head waiter receives a tip of 5-7%, the food-waiter about 5% and the beverage-waiter 1-2%. Guests frequently pay the head-waiter 10-15% above the amount of the bill, and leave it to him to distribute the tips.

One point should be remembered about meals in Budapest, and it is one which I never discovered until we set out to find a suitable place for dinner one evening about seven-thirty. Cafés and restaurants seemed mostly empty, excepting for a few people sipping coffee and reading those

papers which even small cafés will provide for their patrons in Budapest and Vienna.

"We must be somewhat early. Let us wait until eight o'clock," I told my wife.

However, at eight o'clock when we strolled into a restaurant all the chairs were on the tables, and a waiter in his shirt sleeves was sweeping the floor. I thought at first he was packing up for the night, but he explained to me it would be better to come back after a time, and nine o'clock was the best hour. It seemed obvious that if you try to get dinner before 9 p.m. in some places, you are thought eccentric.

We found Budapest full of foreign visitors, and the tourist traffic must nowadays bring in a considerable revenue to the city. This tourist revenue is well earned, for Hungary to-day does her best to smooth the path of her visitors. The result is that when you listen in railway trains and hotels to comparisons of various places, prices, etc., you find few people who express discontent about their visits to Budapest. At least, that has been my experience when talking to tourists. "Why, my husband would have spent the whole of his leave in Budapest if I had let him, and would never have gone on to England," said one English lady to me. But knowing the husband's tastes I was hardly surprised at her remark. "Wine, women and song" was his motto—and certainly Budapest has all in rich measure.

On every hand we heard the American tongue, and the number of trans-Atlantic visitors must have been unusually great. The "IBUSZ" organisation, with its splendid coaches, has reduced the art of sight-seeing in batches to child's play. One may go all over the place cheaply, quickly and very frequently. An up-to-date Tourist Office, run by the state and managed by people who talk many languages, tells visitors everything they want to know. We also found a very up-to-date and live office of Thos. Cook & Son in the centre of Budapest and this place had a very busy

atmosphere. Official Budapest in her folders invites visitors who think they have been over-charged for anything at all, not to argue about it but to obtain a receipt and take this to the Tourist Office ! If such a system were introduced into some Eastern cities, imagine the weeks of work which would be accumulated after each day's shopping. The amount of what is for some unknown reason called " literature " available to tourists in Budapest is enormous, and all the folders or maps are attractively printed and illustrated in photogravure, often in colours. These folders are available in several languages and distributed freely also. All the hotel prices are published in these folders, per room and with full board.

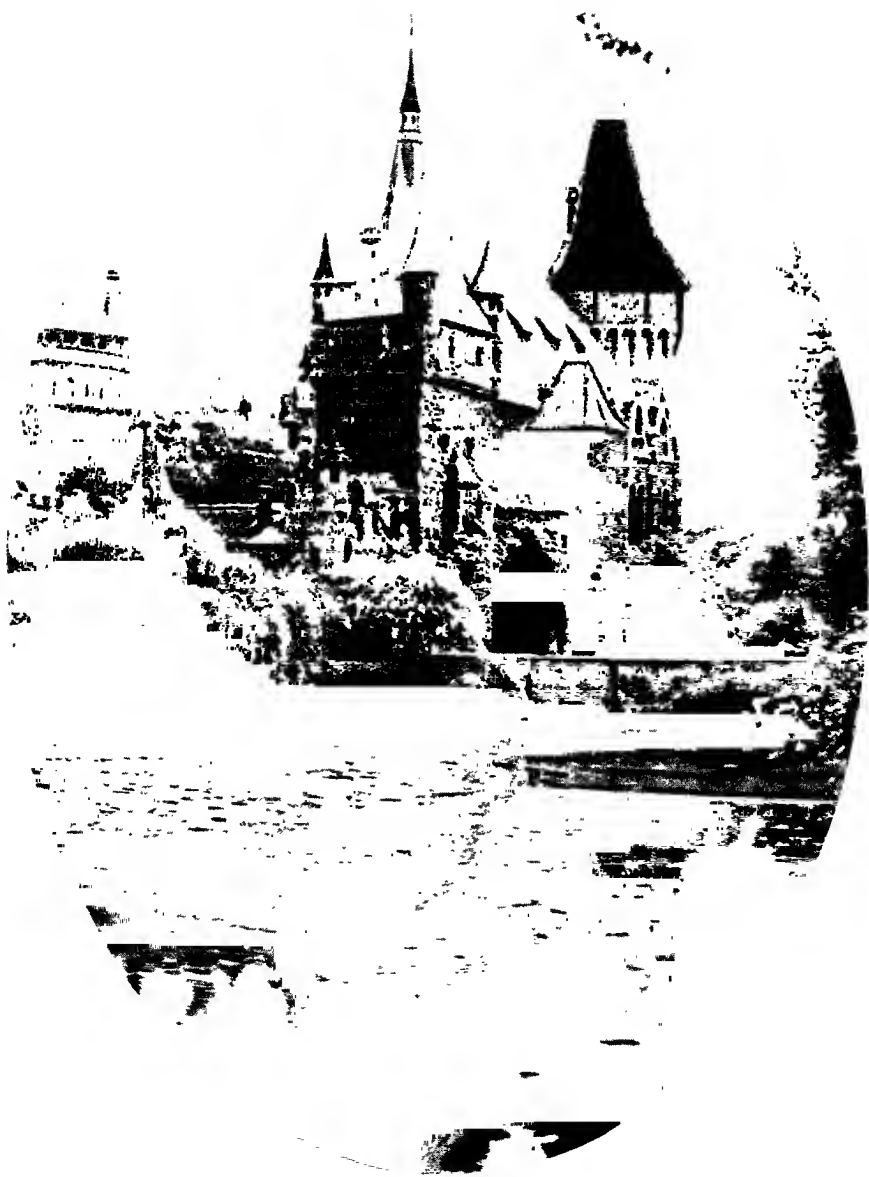
Half way across the Danube, which separates Budapest into the cities of Buda and Pest, lies an isle of enchantment. It is called Margit Szicet, and is reached by one of Budapest's four fine bridges called Margit Hid. The island is a large one and has been cleverly adapted to the needs of Budapest by the powers that be. As everyone pays toll, including cars, the island must bring in good revenue.

An hour after arrival we found ourselves on this island, and Margit Szicet can be recommended as a good place for a preliminary introduction to the many attractions of Budapest—unless one arrives by night, when one should saunter along the boulevard and drive up the hill, see the pearl necklaces of twinkling lights which rope the city by night, and explore the cafés and restaurants, etc. On the island is a good spa with very cheap prices, a magnificent bathing lido with gardens, etc., some good hotels, *Czarda* where one may rest and refresh under the shade of trees while Tzigany music warms the blood and waitresses in national costume decorate the landscape, a riding school, beautiful park-like walks, a dozen or so sports clubs and several other things. It is *the* place to spend a warm and sunny afternoon, perhaps the next best place after being on the waters of the blue





*A lido de luxe in Budapest.*



*The Budapest Museum of Agriculture, looking like some nobleman's castle in the Carpathians.*

Danube or lazing on the sands of one of the many lidos in the city.

Later on we found ourselves in the Museum of Agriculture. This sounds rather dreadful, but the name is misleading. The place looks so alluring from the outside that I felt we must explore. It resembles some Magyar nobleman's castle set in the Carpathians, rather than a museum. The graceful Gothic towers and windows—the building is not pure Gothic but a mixture—are reflected in the still waters of the beautiful lake in Budapest's Park. Inside I found the most astonishing collection of trophies of the chase. I never discovered the name of one-tenth, but I had no idea the forests and mountains of Hungary held one quarter of these animals. Many of the sets of bears, wolves, stags, etc., were finely mounted. Some of the heads were very large, far more massive than any display of record *sambhur* or Kashmiri stag, etc., in India. The sportsman visiting Hungary should certainly see this collection.

Here, too, one may inspect at leisure those farm implements which had been seen from the train *en passant*, fisher folks' methods and implements, information about soils and crops, and a thousand and one other things. A small refreshment bar is also included where one may eat ham sandwiches, sausages, or drink coffee, etc.

We went by underground to the zoo. I was told the Budapest underground, which is very limited in area but quite efficient and cheap, is one of the oldest in Europe, and I can believe it. One of my terrible habits is that of walking round zoos in every city where I happen to be, and I found the Budapest collection one of the cleanest and best presented of dozens I have seen. It is not a large zoo as the zoos of big cities go, and one can walk around at leisure in an hour or so. But the settings of lions or bears, etc., on terraces, without bars, is so well done that the keen photographer or cine man will find here ready ground for his hobby.

The collection of Central European deer is good, but it is a pity some of the panthers and other carnivora cannot have more room for exercising beyond their narrow cages.

Opposite the zoo is one of the many bathing establishments in Budapest. This is a particularly fine one, and must have accommodation for a thousand people or more. There are warm and cold pools and even though you do not wish to swim or sunbathe it is well worth paying the admission fee to watch for a short while. The Hungarians of to-day seem to be passionately fond of sunbathing. It is the custom to soak one's skin in the magnificent sunshine until it becomes a nice nutty brown! There is plenty of broadcast music—verandahs—chairs—refreshments—and beauty all around.

We left this lido in order to see that gigantic canvas mounted under a big dome which tells through its 360 degrees of colour something of the early history of Hungary. In the front are placed replicas of burning houses, camp fires, and much of the desolation of war. This gives the giant canvas, which is viewed from an interior circular gallery, a touch of realism. The Magyars first came as nomadic raiders up the Danube valley from Asia a thousand years ago, and their first king, St. Stephen, accepted Christianity and a crown from the Pope. Since then Hungary has stood like an outpost of Europe against tides of invasion—and suffered accordingly. That is, to my mind at least, one good reason why the Christian peoples of Western Europe should visit Hungary to pay some sort of holiday "pilgrimage" in slight acknowledgement of what the Magyars have done for Western civilisation. When the last of the Yacello line of Hungary's kings perished on a fatal battlefield in 1526, with 20,000 of his men, the Turkish standards afterwards fluttered over the whole country—almost, but not quite, for the Hapsburg Ferdinand ruled a small remnant. It was almost two centuries later that his successors completed the wresting back of his fair land from the misrule of the Turk. Now once again the

country is suffering from the aftermath of a great war. On all sides territory has been taken away and given to the Succession States. Her only port has gone, and the new States all around have built against Hungary high tariff walls. The Treaty of Trianon took away from Hungary some twelve million subjects who went to Austria, Rumania, Jugoslavia and Czecho Slovakia; and of these twelve million a quarter are estimated to be Magyars.

“What it amounts to is, that our central agricultural plain remains to us; and the surrounding hill country, so rich in the vital minerals, and timber and other raw materials which are necessary to our industrial development, has been taken from us. The hill and the plain are complementary from an economic standpoint and one cannot exist without the other. That is why dismembered Hungary is so poor, and always will be until this wrong has been put right.”—Thus a Magyar friend of mine put the position in a nutshell. The visitor will find himself, and particularly herself, getting very angry when these things are seen and pondered.

But it would be wrong to give the impression that this state of affairs has produced despair and inertia. Everywhere around Budapest one sees smoking factories and busy workshops. Hungary is again selling her products to the world, and her rich agricultural products, tended by work-loving Magyar sons of the soil, will at least prevent starvation during another European upheaval. The magnificent Magyar courage which endured two centuries of Turkish rule, and then rose, uncrushed, to fling out the invader, has bred in the peoples of modern Hungary a faith in themselves and a fervent patriotism, which is a bright augury for the future—in spite of the present gloom.

We wanted to go to Mezokovesd, in order to see those beautiful national dresses which have made this place famous to all visiting tourists. These garments are brilliant with colour and beautiful embroidery, while the headdresses alone

are works of art. But Mezokovesd is 150 kilometres distant, and somehow or other we did not get there. Sundays and festival days are the best times for a visit, for on Sundays the Catholic village takes out of its beautifully carved linen chests these wonderful costumes and walks sedately to Mass.

The foreign girl who only knows of Hungary that it is associated with those "Hungarian blouses," turned out in Lancashire, Paris, and every other textile centre, can have no conception of the elaborateness of the real peasant costume in this country. Gaily coloured woollen stockings are hidden by the crisp semi-starched folds of two or three linen petticoats falling to exactly the right length, and billowing out into a shape reminiscent of our great grandmothers' crinolines. The top of the crinoline leads the eye to a tightly laced waist from which falls the beautifully embroidered coloured skirt. Over this is worn a bright apron, much like the Austrian apron worn by Viennese girls, but instead of being printed in gay colours, the Magyar peasant apron reveals the patient embroidery work of many long winter evenings. The designs are flowers such as tulips, roses, or more conventional patterns, whose *motifs* often spring from the harvest fields. Below the bodice is the typical blouse with puffed sleeves, and bright colours are very popular. Rural Hungary knows little of bobbing, shingling and bingling, and in the case of the children, the hair is drawn back, often parted in the middle, and falls over the slim brown shoulders in two glistening black plaits.

We watched many of these children going to an afternoon service in a pretty village outside Budapest. As they walked hand in hand up the long yellow entrance steps to the church they made a fine sight. The dress of the men is almost as picturesque, but alas! it is giving way more freely to the ordinary lounge suit and felt hat. The passionate vitality of the hymns and other music inside the church is all part of this same colourful picture, and will at once strike the English



*The famous monument in Budapest mentioned at the bottom of page 90.*

*The Budapest zoo is well worth a visit.*





*The blue Danube.*

*A trip on the Danube, with Parliament buildings in the distance.*





visitor who is so accustomed to restrained reverence and the comparative coldness of English church services. Small boys and girls sing out as though they were practising for the Opera.

There is much good value for excursion money in Budapest, and one of the cheapest and most delightful is a short trip down the Danube and back. For a couple of *pengos*, or under two shillings, one has a two-hour river trip through delightful scenery, tea and music included. No wonder the vessel was crowded.

It is a hot afternoon and as we glide downstream the Danube really does look blue, as it should; in Budapest itself it so often looks grey. Thousands of rowing boats, outboard motor boats and little canoes dot the water. Laughing couples glide by in these small craft, and over half the men are bare above the waist. Practically all the girls wear bathing costumes, or those most abbreviated of trunks and large breast handkerchiefs which would have shocked pre-war modernists and even nowadays cause old gentlemen behind their glare glasses to blink (or stare) at English seaside resorts. Hungarian lads and lasses evidently believe fervently in sunbathing.

At one end of the ship a pianist is hard at work. He is surrounded by American tourists and he is hammering out the epic musical story of "Daisy" and her marriage tandem. At the other end of the steamer is an Hungarian orchestra playing passionately and appropriately "The Blue Danube" and other music. One has only to listen to a Tzigany orchestra while watching the banks of the great Danube move by, to realize what the composers owe to that river. The emotional strength, the depth, belongs essentially to the Danube itself. The love of the Hungarian for the Danube and all that it means to Hungary is easily understood.

We glide by the island as hundreds of happy bathers line the Lido balconies and wave. Further downstream, on

our left, is a great river Lido where thousands of other bathers are spending their leisure in the Danube or on its banks. As we return, we get a fine view from the water of the magnificent Parliament buildings, whose riverside facade is so impressive a feature of Budapest. One is inevitably reminded of Westminster on Father Thames. But in the old Imperial Palace, towering above the other bank and almost opposite, there is a no resemblance to the ugliness of Buckingham Palace. This Palace is so large that you must be miles away in order to see it all at once ! It is a thousand feet long and has over a thousand rooms ! It belongs to those spacious days when the kings of Europe tried to outbid each other in Palace buildings. Its miles of feet-aching corridors remind one of Versailles, or of that colossal Hapsburg show place just outside Vienna. One wonders instinctively to what use it could be put, even if and when the monarchy is ever restored to Hungary. For a *pengo*, you may take a route march through these vast apartments, in one small corner of which resides the present Regent, Admiral Horthy. In the royal chapel, by the way, is the treasured right hand of Saint Stephen, embalmed and kept in a jewelled casket. On St. Stephen's day in August, this holy relic is taken from the Royal Chapel and borne through the streets of Budapest amid much rejoicing and splendour.

Budapest is an easy and cheap place in which to shop. Many travellers nowadays declare that taking it all round, London is the cheapest shopping centre. We were able to compare prices and found a great many things cheaper in Budapest. But in saying this, I am not referring to those fancy prices designed for the special benefit of tourists in the local "Bond Street."

At one time Andrassy Ut was the Regent Street of Budapest, but it has now lost caste, compared with some of the more modern shops in the other streets. At the end of Andrassy Ut is a famous military monument, a collection of

memorials grouped together in artistic ensemble. There is the grave of the Unknown Soldier, and a central pillar surmounted by the archangel Gabriel, holding the Hungarian double cross in his hands. In the arc of a circle behind is a colonnade filled with statues of Hungary's most famous kings—and, of course, one great queen. This is a sort of Trafalgar Square of Budapest, only much more attractive and artistic; and as with Trafalgar Square, the National Gallery stands just behind.

Through the kindness of an Hungarian friend, who gave me a letter of introduction to a Budapest cine director, I was able to visit the cine studio, which I was informed was owned by the State and rented by various companies. Production of a modern film was going on, and we spent an hour or so watching. Such film work is, of course, much more tedious and uninteresting to the unsophisticated than is generally realised. Unless the visitor is interested in technical problems, like lighting, make-up, sets, acting, camera angles, etc., he will soon be bored. A company will work all day so thoroughly that perhaps they produce only two or three minutes of finished film. Small shots are rehearsed and rehearsed—and then rehearsed again. If the spectator is lucky he may see the shot filmed. Everyone in this studio seemed to be on excellent terms, and the very pretty Hungarian actress would discuss the script and receive instructions whilst sitting gleefully on the knees of the director or leading man. That director was clever. The star looked temperamental, and he was petting and coaxing her into just the mood for the scene in which she had to act. He seemed to be using his brain and heart instead of the megaphone. Actors and actresses seemed to be full of little secrets, (or they may have been funny stories ?) which they whispered into each other's ears with intermittent giggles. In fact, the whole place had a very friendly atmosphere. Now and again a gorgeously robed actress, not on the set, would take lunch

whilst strolling about—holding a large mug of beer and a sandwich about three inches thick at which her pretty mouth nibbled, much as a small rabbit might nibble a turnip. I never had an opportunity of seeing a good Hungarian film, but the production in this studio seemed to be very painstaking and clever. Artistic instincts and deep emotionalism must necessarily be among the important ingredients of film production, so that from this viewpoint Hungary ought to be able to produce good films. Her scope is, of course, necessarily limited through the fact that the Hungarian language is a sealed book to most Europeans, bearing a resemblance to Turkish more than anything else—the tourist presented with a long menu in Hungarian will soon discover how very “sealed” is the book !

One night we had dinner at a restaurant on Margit Insel, where the tables are placed daintily round a central dance well which can be beautifully illuminated for cabaret purposes. The “ceiling” is formed by creeping vinery and other verdure. I cannot remember the name of this place, but the atmosphere there on a hot evening is very pleasant, though I do not know what the management would do in the event of a sudden rainstorm. Most of the restaurants and tables were filled with a whole special trainload of English tourists, and I was told by the helpful manager of Wagon-Lits/Cook that the people in this special train were doing a short tour of Austria, Hungary, etc., at a total all-in cost, which was rather less than the first class rail fare, return, from London ! Such are the wonders of modern tourist organisation. The cabaret show—which was really more of a concert than cabaret—consisted of excellent Hungarian music and songs, and one or two extremely well done peasant dances in costume. There was also a mannequin parade of various costumes and Hungarian dresses, and I noticed that the prettiest girls and not the prettiest dresses got all the applause. One was struck by the variety of these peasant and period costumes, which

would need a whole chapter for adequate description. Apricot brandy seemed popular after dinner, and I was told that the Duke of Windsor had "discovered" this Hungarian liqueur, and done much to popularize it among tourists.

We had intended doing the journey from Budapest to Vienna by the steamer up the Danube. However, this trip would have taken us about twenty-four hours as opposed to a four-hour journey by road or rail, and consideration of the time factor unfortunately forced us to abandon the Danube trip. The steamer journey is very cheap, and if time is no object, I should imagine it could be extraordinarily pleasant. However we found ourselves in the train and I noticed my two German carriage companions glaring hard at my camel hair travelling rug which I had brought from India. After some minutes my curiosity was enlightened, for they pointed excitedly to a row of swastikas at one end of the rug, and asked whether I came from Berlin! I laughingly showed them the tab "made in Cawnpore" on the rug, and I was further able to inform them that the real swastika was of Indian origin, and associated with India long before Herr Hitler thought of it. The disappointment of my companions was obviously as great as their amusement.

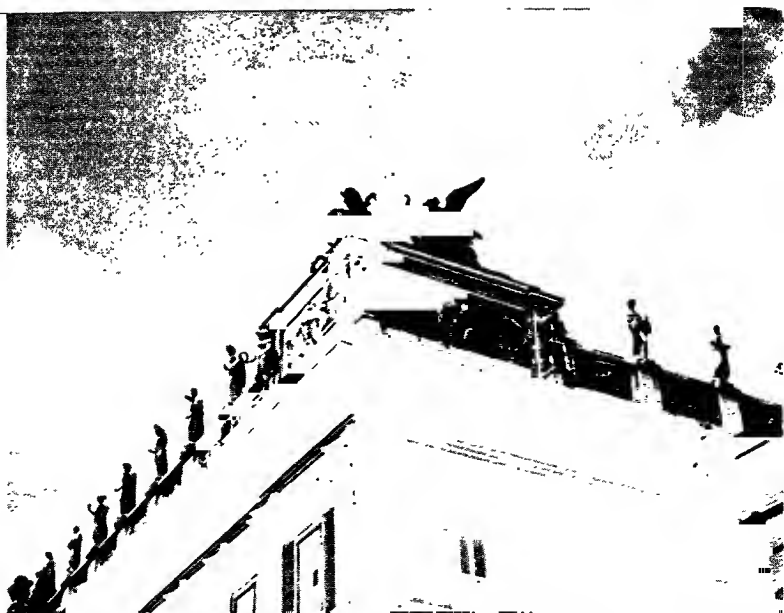
The financial stringency which so often sets in during the latter part of a long holiday tour kept us away from Vienna's smart-looking hotels. Moreover, our number was to be increased by the addition of a young daughter, flying from Croydon to Vienna to meet us. But we were very pleased indeed with the excellent and inexpensive *pension*, to which Thos. Cook & Sons sent us. Modern Vienna has accommodation to suit all purses, it seems, and one can be extremely comfortable in these *pensions*, which have an air of greater friendliness and give to the visitor a knowledge of Viennese life never to be obtained in hotels. We learnt, for instance, that the Viennese apartment dweller who stays out after 10 p.m. has to awaken the porter and pay toll.

After midnight the toll increases from 30 *groschen* to 50 *gr.* ! But for this small fee of a few pence any number of persons may be admitted at once. We also discovered that the nine foot high tiled structure, standing in the corner of the bedroom and looking like a great grandfather clock, was nothing but a gigantic stove. I thought at first it was some sort of ornamental cupboard or family heirloom, as the bedroom seemed comfortably furnished with radiators and central heating. But the big double windows throughout these houses were a constant reminder that Viennese winters are really severe. The air-cushion between the two panes keeps in warmth, and the Viennese honestly acknowledge their cold winters by making adequate provision. The stove was a most ingenious arrangement, and its winding passages for hot air must give out ample heat—a comforting thought for the climatically-spoilt visitor from India in the cold weather. The guest is provided free with central heating, but buys his own stove fuel should this prove necessary.

All the *pension* rooms have house telephones, and the telephone exchange girl spoke several languages, including English. The phones were used in place of the customary bells.

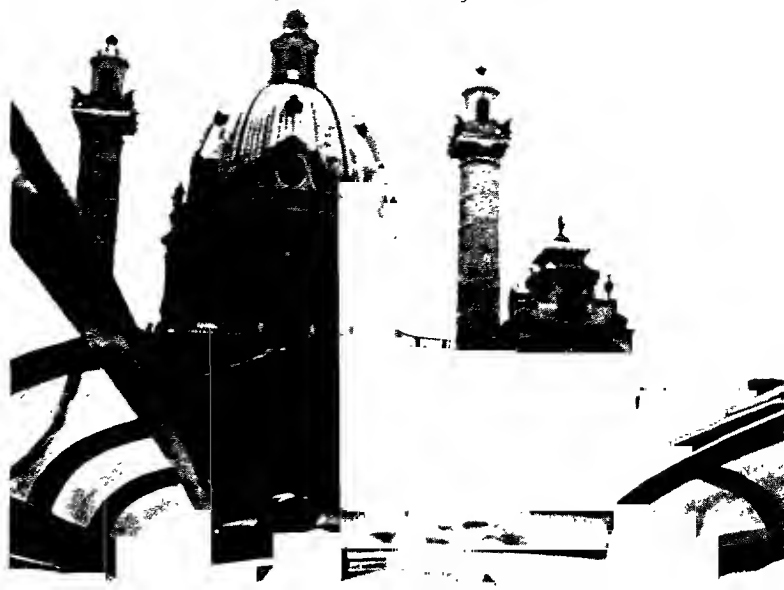
A gentleman from Brazil was staying in the *pension* and told me he was on a motoring tour through most of Europe, and that he was quite convinced Germany was the cheapest place for the visitor. Like many others I had met, he was loud in his praise of the roads of that country. Personally, I do not know where we could have obtained better value for money than in this *pension*—nor did I desire it. For ten Austrian *schillings* per day each (then equal to eight shillings English money) we had large rooms with H. and C., and early morning coffee with lunch or dinner. The service was good, the food well cooked and most appetising without being unduly elaborate.

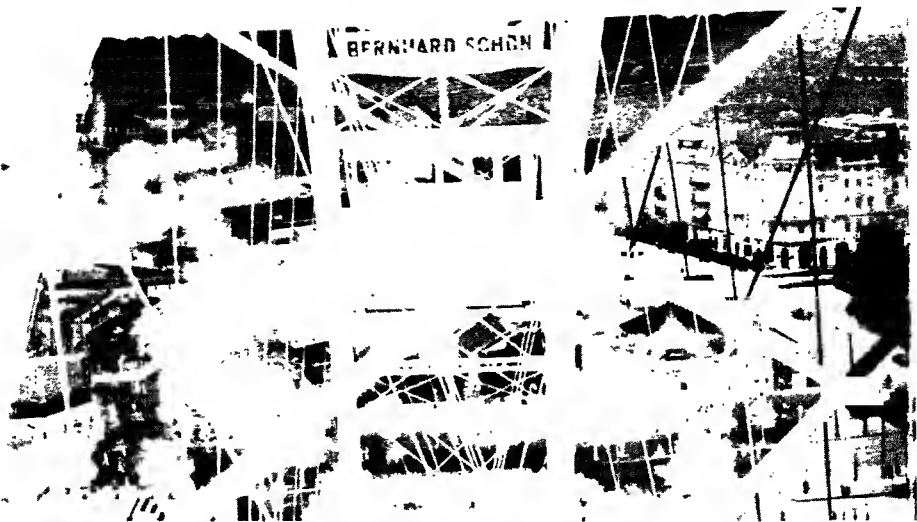
To give the reader an idea of prices, I quote from the official folder classification of hotels and *pensions* in Vienna.



*Vienna is the proud owner of Europe's most beautiful buildings—silhouettes like these are frequent.*

*A motor-coach tour of Vienna.*





*A glimpse of Vienna from the great wheel of the Prater.*

*In the amusement park of the Prater where the young Viennese flock in the evenings.*

Photo officially supplied by O. V. W.





This was issued when the exchange was about 25 Austrian *schillings* to the English pound, so that the reader can work it out for himself.

## HOTELS AND PENSIONS.

Single rooms without bathroom with,				without
Hotels :—				board
Plain	..	..	.. S	7—12 S 3—8
Medium	..	..	.. „	8—16 „ 4—10
Select	..	..	.. „	10—26 „ 5—14
First class	..	..	.. „	14—32 „ 8—15

Single rooms without bathroom,				
Pensions,				board inclusive.
Plain	..	..	.. ..	S 6—12
Medium	..	..	.. ..	„ 7—12
Select	..	..	.. ..	„ 8—14
First class	..	..	.. ..	„ 10—18

Most of the hotels in Vienna will add the tips on a percentage basis if you desire. The rule is 15 per cent. for a stay of less than three days, and 10 per cent. for one of longer duration. For meals the Viennese restaurants are cheap, but the coffee houses, etc., may not always prove so inexpensive, and seem to me to compare unfavourably with the tea rooms and restaurants in London—though allowance must be made for the fact that music, literature, etc., is provided.

One afternoon we motored out in the Airways coach to the aerodrome, which is a very long way away from Vienna, as is the case of most big cities—and Vienna has the proud reputation of being the largest city in area on the Continent. In population it is third. Our mission was to meet our fourteen-year-old daughter, who was flying that day from London to share our holiday. The Imperial Airways' pilot had very kindly taken charge of her, and thanks to the marvel of modern air transport she was able to leave Croydon at 10 a.m. and arrive about 5 p.m., after a journey of some 900 miles—a journey which would have necessitated the expense of a companion if done by train and steamer. This plane service, by the way, goes on to Budapest, so that the visitor to Hungary may have breakfast in London and tea in

Budapest. The fares on these long air trips in Europe are extraordinarily reasonable and the saving of time and trouble is too obvious to be stressed. This plane had arrived slightly early, and we found a somewhat lonely little girl seated patiently in the waiting room. I had hoped to have taken one or two cine-shots on the landing ground, but was informed that such photography was not permitted, and even the production of my camera outside, near the entrance porch, quite alarmed one or two officials. The regulation regarding cameras at such places is extraordinarily strict, and all cameras are taken away from passengers in the air, of course.

Very little need be mentioned about the magnificent streets and the big buildings of Vienna which have made this city famous throughout Europe. The reader might just be reminded that Vienna has the greatest area of open parks, the best kept streets and the best water system ; also probably the most beautiful public buildings in the whole world. One or two days should certainly be set aside for visits to these buildings, and for walks around Vienna combined with shopping excursions. One of the charms of this ancient capital which at one time, of course, ruled the destinies of most of Europe, is the real welcome which Vienna gives to her visitors. Every Viennese from the hotel porter to the manager or *pension* manageress, the little shopkeeper, or the girl behind the counter in the big store—all are so obviously anxious to please and to make the visitor's holiday a happy one, that at times it becomes positively embarrassing.

A suggested list of excursions in the city, extracted from a handy official folder, is given in the appendix, so that we need not weary the reader by detailing them here. Special mention, however, might be made of the Palace of Schonbrunn which may be reached by the subway from Karlsplatz, or by one of those handy tourist coaches.

As there are 1,441 rooms, and miles of corridors, the ambitious tourist who wants "to do things thoroughly"

had better be warned. For the average person, one or two hundred rooms in a morning will suffice. Many of these are extraordinarily beautiful. The magnificent paintings and the vast displays of china, and other pieces of vertu are rather breathtaking in their magnificence. One is shown vast canvases containing many hundreds of heads—each one a portrait! One senses here something of the magnificence of the Hapsburgs, when they were at their zenith, and much of the simple taste of the beloved Emperor Franz Josef, who lived in only a few of the rooms. The amazing series of domestic misfortunes which befell the late Emperor before his death during the Great War, seems to have awakened the naturally sympathetic natures of the Viennese people, and one can feel this even as the guide takes us through his rooms and tells us something of his life. With bitter truth did the Emperor exclaim, “Am I to be spared no private sorrow?”

The gardens of the palace are worth studying, and were brought to their present state of grandeur by that remarkable ruler, the Empress Maria Theresa, who made it her home during her 40 years reign in the Eighteenth Century. The visitor is bound to be struck by the resemblance to the gardens of Versailles, and it is said the Empress was always anxious to surpass the beauty of these. Obviously, rivalry between the crowned heads of Europe in those days accounts for much of this palatial magnificence in European capitals. In all kinds of weather the Empress used to walk about these gardens and take a close personal interest in them, and it was here that she mothered her very large brood of children. Twice Napoleon lived in this palace—once in 1805 and again in 1809, and it was here also that the Emperor Charles ended the long dynasty of the Hapsburgs by abdicating at the close of the War.

One very hot afternoon we went to the big Lido in the Prater, that vast public park which was at one time a royal hunting forest and which stretches from the Danube Canal

to the Danube. It must be one of the largest parks in Europe and affords splendid recreation and amusement to Vienna's millions. All the swimming pools were crowded with happy Viennese and there was little indication of the depression of which one hears so much. I had no bathing costume and as I was about the only man in clothes, I felt as conspicuous among these semi-nudists as a nudist at a church meeting. Light-hearted Vienna was enjoying itself in the magnificent sunshine and in the water—a sight that was well worth watching. We shot some good colour films.

Strolling along to the amusement section of the Prater later on, we asked the way from a Viennese lady. As she was going in that direction, and obviously wanted to air her English, we walked along together. Although she could not have been more than twenty she had just been to America, and her ambition in life was to return to that country. When told that we had come from Budapest, she immediately popped the following question to me :

“And what did you think of the Budapest girls?”

The manner in which my questioner popped her chin out, made me realize I was on thin ice, and as my wife and daughter were by my side I replied that my knowledge was too limited to be worth anything, but I thought they seemed “very nice indeed.”

“Ah, far *too* nice!” was her cryptic retort. “They don’t really mean it, and I don’t think they are sincere,” she added.

I wondered whether this was merely feminine jealousy of the natural kind, or whether it was the old antipathy between Austria and Hungary which in the past had led to bitter war, and which broke into public indignation when an Hungarian attempted to assassinate the young Emperor Franz Josef—an event which resulted in the building of the beautiful Votive Church in Vienna as a thanks offering for

his escape. Probably it was just girlish jealousy of the national kind, for Vienna and Budapest are not far apart.

The amusement part of the Prater embraces hundreds of little show places, and many quite good cafes or beer gardens. Here the lads and lasses of Vienna come in the evening to relax and to enjoy themselves, and here the visitor will find it harder than ever to realize that Vienna really is one of the depressed cities of Europe at the present time. All the people in the Prater amusement park seem to be forever on the bubble ; high spirits, merry eyes and hearty laughter greet one all around. The large Ferris wheel dominates the landscape, and we took a trip up aloft. This is an excellent place, by the way, from which to shoot cine films or take photographs of Vienna, and from the top of this great wheel of iron one gains some idea of the extent of this vast city.

Another spot from which you can view Vienna below you is the very attractive castle of Cobenzl. Here we were taken one evening by a very kind-hearted Bombay gentleman and his Viennese wife. We sat on the beautifully-sited verandah, and below us stretched the great city, with the silvery thread of the Danube through it. It was all extraordinarily pleasant, and much of the charm was due to the company. My friend had produced a niece from a finishing school in Paris, a Parsee girl whose unusual beauty seemed to attract a good deal of attention, even in Vienna, where feminine beauty is nothing out of the ordinary. Some of the Parsee families of Bombay could, if they wished—but they would never wish !—produce some of the most attractive beauty competition winners to be seen. As we dined in the open air, on the terrace of the Schloss, I could see our neighbours wondering whether the lady at our table was Italian, Magyar, or French:

Up this hill young Vienna comes to dance in the evening. It was one of those *intime* ballroom floors which one would

think might hold half a dozen couples, but whereon anything up to a hundred people actually continue to dance.

The orchestra played some beautiful Austrian music, and then, for our special benefit presumably, we had "Daisy"—a piece of musical bathos which was amusing at all events.

"Now don't get a shock," said my host's charming wife in a pretty Viennese accent, and she beckoned to a gigolo.

That handsome young gentleman came forward and with due elegance and that sinuous polish displayed only by gigolos and head waiters, waltzed away with our hostess.

I had previously been wondering whether I should offer to waltz that old-fashioned Viennese waltz, but now I realized how mistaken I had been. If I had attempted half what the gigolo did, I should have been carried away on a stretcher. Round and round they spun like a boy's top, and even watching would have made the average jazz shuffler dizzy, and certainly it would have turned him green with envy. They kept it up for minutes at a bewilderingly fast tempo, and as our hostess returned I stood up and made ready to catch her in case she should swoon from dizziness.

"That was lovely," she said with a cool smile, and sat down.

The gigolo bowed with more exquisite polish. Not one hair of his sleek head was out of place. He was certainly a wonderful dancer. Presently the good looking niece emulated her aunt's efforts, and showed that though not a Viennese, her visits to that city had certainly taught her how to dance in true Viennese style. And to think that not a generation ago the Parsees of Bombay looked on ballroom dancing as something very terrible—even today the daughters and sons of the more orthodox families sometimes have to dance on the sly.

Talking of amusing places, the visitor to Vienna should not miss seeing a heuriger. These are in gardens in vineyard



Photo officially supplied.

*Tyrolese costume.*



*The sign of a heuriger.*

*In a heuriger garden at Grinzing, a suburb of Vienna.*

Photo officially supplied by O. V. W.





districts such as Grinzing, a suburb of Vienna below Cobenzl. Here the new wine is served and comedians perform. Their stunts are not up to music hall standard, but there is an air of *camaraderie* about a hueriger which is an essential part of the whole. It is amazing how the leader of the orchestra will guess your nationality when you arrive. He will promptly play some popular national song of yours—that will cost you a shilling or two, on payment of which you are admitted as “of the party.” In due time all the guests are expected to sing—in fact community singing seems to be popular at most of such places of entertainment in Vienna. Bows of evergreen are hung over the doors of these *heurigen*, which are visited by people of all classes. Here therefore one may get a cross-section of Viennese life during its leisure hours. Quite good class people often visit *heurigen* in a party when they want to relax, and sometimes food is taken along by the party. The fresh wine seems to be potent, for quite dignified visitors may be observed later on breaking out into amorous spots !

One day we noticed most of the city exhibiting long black streamers of mourning. Black cloth hung down from the many high buildings and fluttered sadly in the breeze. There was scarcely a street without its many yards of hanging black. Vienna was in mourning for Dr. Dolfuss, and that night thousands of candles were burnt piously in the windows of buildings, large and small.

At week-ends and holidays the Viennese love to go out hiking. Even if it is only for the day the rucsac is well filled and off they tramp. One Sunday morning when we got off a tram at Grinzing and commenced to walk up the vineclad hill to Cobenzl we found the road packed with rucsac-carrying people. The rucsac is passed around the family in turns, and even children like to take a brief spell at carrying it. The men seem to love the Tyrolean leather shorts and braces. It is good to see so much of the Austrian dress and the bright

apron is still most popular with Miss Vienna when she is out for the day, or even when shopping and buying the morning provisions.

Without any attempt to explore the complex political labyrinth of Central Europe to-day, the visitor to Vienna may be well rewarded by attempting to discover for himself something of local politics. Vienna is one of the few very large cities, outside Russia of course, where Socialism or something like it has been in operation for any length of time. I was told by several Viennese that the Social Democrats as a party were losing ground. When I asked what was the extent of Nazi influence in Austria nobody could or would tell me, but one or two residents said it was impossible to say but might be half. The Municipal flats about which so much has been written in the foreign press are worth seeing. These apartments are for the working classes, and are compact and small, well lighted and of concrete and iron construction, with tiled floors. They are almost fireproof. There are balconies, airy courts with flower gardens and seats, and each set of apartments has ample bathing accommodation with private showers, served by a great boiler. A nominal price is charged for each bath. There are steam laundries, with all the latest electric appliances such as washing machines, wringers, dryers, mangles—all those things which many a middle class housewife longs for but can never afford.

A good description of these apartments, as well as the whole position of the landlords and both points of view, is set out in Dr. Alexander Mahan's book "Vienna, Yesterday and To-day," (Halm and Goldmann Succ., Vienna). I shall always be grateful to my wife for discovering this little book and presenting it to me, for it has a really up-to-date and comprehensive survey of modern Vienna, and can be recommended to anyone who wants to read about that city and its inhabitants. Dr. Mahan has really got under the skin of the city he so obviously loves, and of its people; and his humorous,

gentle sympathy makes bright reading. He gives the story of a typical tenant, and then relates the experiences of a ruined landlord who could hardly afford to live in his own block of flats. In describing some of the poverty and unemployment still so distressing a feature of Viennese life, he says that what an American tourist spends in Vienna in one day would last the ruined landlord's family for a fortnight—perhaps a month !

One of my regrets was that we had to leave without seeing the famous Spanish Riding School, which I was told was then closed. Any month is a good month in Vienna, but July is not exactly *the* month. "September in Vienna is hard to beat anywhere," I was told by my friend, a much travelled man ; while the winter, with its famous masked balls, its operas and concerts, is obviously an attractive time of the year. But in July many folk have gone to Salzburg for the Festival, and like London in August, the city loses some of its attraction then.

## CHAPTER V.

### FROM VIENNA TO LONDON.

WE abandoned the idea of going to Salzburg for the Festival, for that beauty spot was described as "packed out!" We took train for Italy and Switzerland, with ideas about cooling Alpine breezes and blue lakes. The evening run up the Semmering was delightful—avoid doing this bit by night if you have to go through it. The Semmering is a colony of fine hotels and villas amid magnificent mountain forests, spotted with those Austrian castles which always seem to be perched on the tops of impossible looking crags with wonderful views. With an engine behind and one in front, we rise puffingly up the oldest large-scale mountain railway in Europe, cine-shooting some fine views *en route*.

The cine enthusiast who must do what he shouldn't and shoot from the train should remember, by the way, that 24 frames a second will give much better results than the usual 16—with proportionate diaphragm adjustment for the faster speed of course. Even at this faster speed it is difficult to avoid those bumps which cause the screen jumpiness that somewhat mars scenery. Flexing at the knees can be helpful, but I am told the ideal is to fix the camera to the train by some sort of bracket. An acquaintance who thus shot scenery from a train with a clamped tripod said the scenery flowed by so smoothly that it was not convincing—too smooth for a train. Also avoid filming at right angles, but stick to shots front and back when the train is not going too fast. It is the angle that counts. If you include the train in the picture you get best results generally.

Catching good pictures with an ordinary still camera as the view moves by is another amusement calculated to call for quick decision. I have found speeds of from 1/100th to 1/300th of a second quite sufficient, though sometimes the

view is unexpectedly marred by the sudden appearance of a telegraph pole or wires.

Our entry into Italy was marked by more formality than in the case of any of the countries hitherto. An official said "Passports" and disappeared : this was merely the prelude. A second official examined the passport a few moments later, and afterwards it had to be produced again for yet a third ! Two officials also appeared for customs examination, but apparently one was concerned solely with money. Yet a third produced a form which had to be entered with details of money brought into the country. All this sounds on paper rather officious and irritating, but in reality, it was nothing of the kind and was simplicity itself. When a country is trying to run two kinds of money, one for residents, and one for tourists (who have to stay a minimum period to get the advantage, by the way) such precautions are inevitable.

The attractions of Italy, its historic cities, beautiful lakes and health resorts are too well-known to be mentioned here. We were unfortunately unable to tarry on the way, and came back from Vienna by this somewhat round about route because we had booked through.

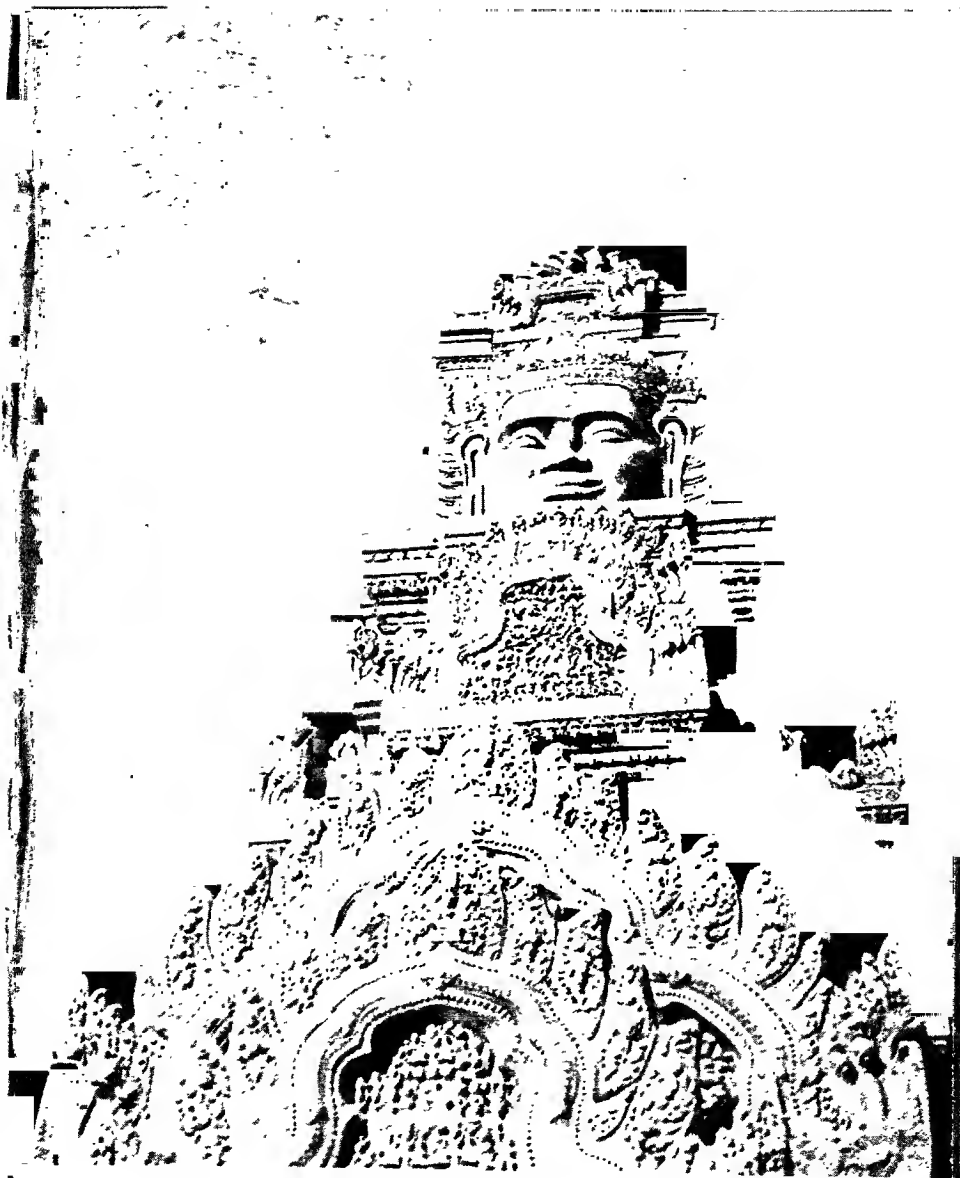
Montreux was hot, but we found cool breezes in the evening on the lake of Geneva. This heat wave seemed to be following us along and the temperature was again in the eighties. The only really cool and bracing day was when we climbed (seated in the mountain railway train I blush to say !) to the top of that magnificent viewpoint Rochers de Naye, some 6,000 feet above sea level. There it was very cool, especially when the young daughter, being unduly encouraged, delivered a snowball with deadly accuracy into the gap between collar and chin.

It seemed equally hot in Paris two days later, and walking round the big Exhibition on a sticky afternoon was more reminiscent of Bombay in April. By the very long arm of

coincidence we encountered our hostess from Bahrein Island—not once but twice—among the thousands of visitors in the Exhibition. The steamers which were carrying the visitors up and down the Seine were a great blessing on these hot days, and enabled one to get a fine view of a colossal show, well worth seeing. By the way, a very attractive part of the Exhibition for amateur photographers and cine people was on the island where the colonies of France were represented by realistic villages, etc. It was here, curiously enough, that I secured interrupted cine shots, and some good photographs of a Syrian Bedouin Arab outside his tent—an interruption caused in Iraq by the sudden appearance of unpleasant looking Bedouin dogs, who quickly “saw me off.”

Our last stage from Paris to London was flown with Imperial Airways. I was told by a friend that this air hop was rather a mistake, and as I was doing a journey from Basra by rail, I should have stuck to the railway line! However, one can hardly stick to the railway line across the Channel or over the Bosphorous; and, in any case, we had a missing rail link in the automobile journey in Iraq. Some day or other, it may be possible to get in a railway train at Basra and, with the help of a train ferry over the Bosphorous, get out at Victoria. But I doubt it! Even so, who would want to do it? The air trip was a delightful and appropriate *finale* to the long journey. It enabled us to sample travel by sea, car, train and plane!

By air from Paris to London, or *vice versa*, is no longer any sort of adventure—it is more like catching a bus. Our only problem was luggage, and by the kind assistance of the Manager of Messrs. Thomas Cook's Paris office, who was extremely helpful, we dumped our tropical kit and spare luggage in Paris to await our return. Paris just then seemed to be very full of English visitors, for it was the first week in August and the usual trans-Channel services had grown to five or six a day, many large planes leaving each hour.



*Seen in the Colonial Section of the Paris Exhibition.*



*Cart-wheel hat in the Colonial Section of the Paris Exhibition.*



We breakfasted on the plane, and having left Paris punctually at eight o'clock we glided gently to earth at Croydon with the precision of an express train at ten-fifteen. The ease, rapidity, cleanliness and comfort of air travel makes it really the most rational method of getting about when time is the main consideration.

It was exactly five weeks to the day since we had left Bombay—five weeks packed with interest in moving from East and West through a dozen countries. We might have made it fifteen days—but I was very glad we didn't.

## CHAPTER VI.

### IN RETROSPECT.

**I**N summing up personal reactions after our five weeks' journey along the Overland Route, I make no apologies for pointing the long finger of "Do's" and "Don'ts" at the reader.

#### *Luggage :*

The first "Don't" should undoubtedly be about luggage. In the spacious country called India, people get so accustomed to moving about with half a house in their luggage, that it is not easy to shed these ideas and to realize that nowadays one can actually go round the world quite comfortably with a couple of suit cases or so—at all events if you are of the masculine and not the feminine gender ! In India, of course, there is plenty of room in the railway carriages and in bungalows, and one has not only to move along with bedding, but with mosquito nets and all the other impedimenta of life, and with things like hand-basins, containing towels and toilet sets. One's own water supply, tiffin basket and the like are very common.

On the journey we are considering this sort of thing is not only entirely unnecessary ; it may be most inconvenient. Not being certain about some of the rest-houses and other places, we took bedding and cushions, though we never really used them, and dumped the *bistra* in Paris. Once or twice we found the rug useful, but not essential. Mosquito nets were never required, and bedding may be hired on the Iraq State Railways for a small fee. There need be no hesitation in using these sets of bedding, which are available for a nominal fee at Maquil (Basra), Baghdad (West or North), and Kirkuk stations. All the Iraq State Railways rest houses are equipped in this respect. It should be remembered that in spring and early winter the weather here can be very cold, and an extra travelling rug with warm clothing, overcoats, etc., may be

a blessing. After the day's road journey necessitated by the railway gap in N. Iraq, one finds the same bedding facilities in the Wagons-Lits carriages of the Taurus Express, and, of course, in the Simplon Orient—sheets and pillow cases of the finest linen, scrupulously clean. Another point about taking any piece of luggage shaped like a valise, is, that it is a nuisance on the luggage racks. Neither in Iraq nor further west can one place anything below the bunk, and while the luggage racks and carriage tops will take quite large suit cases, one on the other, anything shaped like a roll does not fit in.

It should be possible to take all hand luggage. You *can* take a trunk and register it through, but with the passenger such pieces are apt to be a nuisance, involving delay, special journeys to the station, etc.

Happy the traveller, or the couple, who can manage with a few small suit cases, hat box, etc. What is called a "last minute bag," one of those shapeless affairs with zip fasteners, or a small dressing case, is handy to take night attire, toilet requisites, etc., and to save bringing down suit cases from the racks. We had a last minute bag to hold three cameras, film stocks and other photographic odds and ends, and this kept all these things together for displaying to Customs, etc.

### ***Transfers :***

If you are counting the cost carefully, remember that the more small things you have the more expensive it will be when these are being handled by porters at transfers between trains or to hotels, etc. If you have a dozen pieces, (and a camera case, small parcel, strapped travelling rug, etc., will count as "pieces") you will find that these fees mount up to a respectable sum in the long run, *i.e.* over the course of several weeks if you have over a dozen "transfers." (A "transfer" of course, is any movement from train to train or train to hotel, etc.). Most Continental railways have fixed rates for luggage per piece, the first piece generally

costing the most. With a fair number of pieces it may cost you more to go from train to taxi than the taxi fare to the hotel. In spite of what one may say about the British porter, who thanks you for the shilling or so for a pile of luggage, and who has no fixed rate, you will arrive in England to find him the cheapest and best. But he, of course, is not supposed to "accept tips," poor fellow! Another point to remember is that a large number of small pieces of luggage means care in checking them at each transfer and more risk of something being left behind.

With regard to the total weight of luggage, we had three main suit cases each, and numerous odds and ends, and not once did we have our baggage weighed. When you can take all your baggage into the Wagons-Lits compartment with you, the railway authorities do not seem to bother, though they would be entitled to do so if you produced an unconscionable amount. It should be remembered the term "passenger's luggage" excludes what is classed as merchandise on all railways. The allowance on each first class ticket right through this trip is 60 kilos (a kilogramme is 2.2 lbs.) and on second class 40 kilos.

### ***Tickets :***

Regarding the purchase of tickets, the most convenient method is, of course, to make up your mind about itinerary and buy the tickets from a travel office in London or Bombay. They will be presented in one of those handy blue books from which you tear off a page at a time. Remember that it is much cheaper to get a through ticket than to buy individual sections, and the through tickets allow of all the breaks of journey that the average traveller is likely to need.

Second class travel in Europe is most comfortable, and one can easily economise in this way. So far as Wagons-Lits cabin arrangements are concerned the only difference is that "seconds" double up, two in a sleeping cabin, while "firsts" have a cabin each. This applies from the Taurus Express

section of the route from Kirkuk in north Iraq, from which point the Wagons-Lits coaches are attached. Doubtless when the railway is extended in a year or so, their coaches will run right through from Haydaypasha, opposite Istanbul, to Maquil (Basra).

### **Food :**

Wagons-Lits charges for food (one restaurant car for first and second and the same menus), and their supplements for sleeping coach accommodation are quite distinct from railway fares, and these may all be paid at the outset, or as one goes along. We had Wagons-Lits cabin supplements but we paid for our food as we went along : one can buy a book of meal tickets complete, and this method offers a substantial reduction on piecemeal purchases ; but if you are missing out part of the journey, or may miss meals, it is cheaper to pay as you feed. On the more Easterly portion of the journey one hears frequent grouses from economically minded passengers about restaurant car charges. These charges are less than they were formerly, by the way. But the sums mount up in the case of a large family, as half meals are not served for the youngsters. What these grouseurs do not always realise is that one need not always feed *table d'hôte*, and that the menu always has lighter fare *a la carte* for those whose train appetites demand nothing more than a good omelette or cold meats, etc., on occasion. The choice is varied and the food *a la carte* cheap and good.

Travellers' cheques are accepted in these restaurant cars and money can be changed here, as well as on certain stations.

If you keep a diary and an account of where and how the money goes (a depressing but illuminating occupation !) you will soon discover that it is not on the railway so much as off it where you spend most. Hotels, transfers, shopping, amusements, moving about a big city—these things can slim the purse very quickly.

You cannot have a travel holiday without paying for it, of course, but a comparison of personal experiences shows that some people pay very much less than others ! One Indian lady was bemoaning "expenses" to me, and further conversation revealed that she generally stayed at the leading hotels, bought the best theatre seats, and I think she must have spent the rest of her time shopping, judging by the description of presents for friends ! One must live anyway, and living in most European countries to-day is no more expensive than anywhere else ; many places at current rates of exchange are unusually cheap and fine value for money. If one is content to avoid that hectic rushing around, so exhausting, but so often associated in certain minds with what is called " a tour," and to take life more quietly without attending entertainments each and every night, then one's travelling holiday can be much longer for the same money.

***Tips :***

Another lady who went on a world tour for some months told me later that she had kept account of expenses under various heads and found that gratuities amounted to over £100. Nobody need be surprised at this, and the mere 10 per cent. surcharge on some folks' hotel bills alone might amount to this sum over some months. Tips can only be regarded as a legitimate part of travel expenses, and the main thing seems to be to ascertain the usual gratuity adding anything for special services rendered. There is generally someone who will supply this information. The conductor who makes your bed and sees to your passport, luggage, and other needs in the Wagons-Lits cabin is entitled to receive a gratuity for these services, the normal amount depending on the distance covered.

Anyway, there is no reason whatever why gratuities should be too heavy an item in any budget, unless one wishes to be a philanthropist.



*A very old part of Istanbul.*



*Arab shepherd.*

*Time for dejeuner.*

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**Passports, Customs, etc. :**

There should be no need to emphasize the importance of placing one's passport in the hands of a reliable travel agency who will see to the various *visas*, etc. If the agency is *not* reliable and your *visas* are *not* in order you will have good cause to regret this later on. One should make inquiries about any regulations concerning vaccination, inoculation, etc. Iraq in this respect is strictly enforcing her regulations regarding travellers from India, and when we went through she insisted on vaccination against small-pox within three years, and recent cholera inoculation. Such certificates should be pasted in the passport.

Frontiers give no trouble to the ordinary traveller. Nor, in spite of old jokes, do the Customs, when treated with honesty and courtesy. Customs officials are servants of governments who are out to welcome tourist traffic and not to hinder it. As you may not be able to speak to all of them, largish labels printed with the route and destination are useful : they will tell the official that you are a *through passenger* (though the Wagons-Lits conductor has told him already probably) and *through passengers* are not generally suspected of smuggling.

Remember that the old advice one so often reads and is so frequently tempted to ignore, "Be honest with the Customs" is the cheapest in the long run. The penalty on the spot for smuggling in Britain is confiscation of the article and treble duty—or even prosecution if you prefer an alternative ! In other countries it is often more severe.

**Cameras :**

\*You should have no difficulty about a small movie camera plus a still camera, as thousands of travellers carry these nowadays. But don't be tempted to smuggle an expensive camera out of those European countries where they are so comparatively cheap these days. Take with you export certificates and original receipts when you start your

journey : ten to one you will not need these papers, but there they are in case you do have an argument. If you should have to pay duty anywhere, you can get most or all of it back when you leave the country again. You are allowed "a reasonable supply" of film with camera and cine camera, *i.e.* sufficient for current needs. This phrase is liable to wide interpretation, however, and it is impossible to lay down rules and quantities. Customs do not yet appear to have arrived at this stage yet, as they have with tobacco and spirits, etc. If film is charged for, remember that stocks intended for educational purposes, free displays, etc., are generally allowed at very special and nominal tariffs. If you have cine film processed, collect it yourself if convenient ; if not, carry it with you and delay processing if possible. The sending of processed film through the post from one country to another costs duty. I left some in Vienna, collected it in Paris, and took it out of France the next day—but had to pay French duty on it from Austria. One trouble is that colour cine film may not keep in hot weather. Our experiences in this respect are related elsewhere in this book.

Having delivered which sound advice, I may be permitted to add that at over a dozen frontiers we had our baggage looked at only once, and that was by the British customs ! In Italy I began to open my main suitcase, but the "examination" ended there ; and in Basra I had to beg the polite Iraqi officials to look through one case in order that I might shoot a little cine film of Customs for our travel reels.

### ***Odds & Ends :***

Travellers going Westwards will not forget the topi and glare glasses, but those setting off Eastwards from Europe may do so unless reminded. You will need the topi after Istanbul.

A good supply of literature is also indicated. I think it is a pity the Wagons-Lits people do not supply papers and magazines, or even run a library, on all their restaurant

coaches : on some they do have a few magazines I notice. There is ample opportunity for reading, but English books and magazines are not always easy to obtain in some places. I believe the Wagons-Lits tried radio on trains, but abandoned it because the radio diffusion was not always acceptable, and there were other difficulties. In certain countries train cinemas have been tried—but this again involves being in the dark to get best results !

What is called a “ parlour car ” might be a good idea to provide a meeting ground for passengers, with reading and games, etc., and would probably help to break down that splendid isolation that ultimately oppresses in a Wagons-Lits cabin. Such cars might help to make a long train journey more sociable and bring it nearer the level of the comfort of sea travel. Here again there are difficulties, for an extra coach on some of these heavy through expresses may mean an extra engine, which is the main item in the expense. Coaches may be added to a train without expense ; engines are another pair of shoes !

### *Diversions :*

There are a number of easy diversions from the straight route which might be considered when planning the itinerary. The first one that occurs to the traveller on leaving India is to cut out that eight days' sea trip to Basra, and fly in one day. If time is a consideration this is a useful idea. It is possible, however, that the sea trip may be shortened some day ; or even that one may be able in the next twenty years to go by train from Quetta into Persia and so to Baghdad ! This unlikely extension of the railway would make the train journey continuous. The adventurous could, however, travel by road into Afghanistan and Persia and so to Baghdad, taking the train there. Persia is at present building a long railway to link her seaboard with the north.

The day's journey by car along the missing link of the Iraq State Railways section, between Kirkuk and Tel Kocheh,

can also be avoided if one decides to go from Baghdad westwards across the desert by those big air-conditioned Nairn coaches. They have the reputation of being comfortable, dustproof, and cool, and one picks up the Taurus Express in Palestine instead of at Tel Kocheh, the two lines joining near Aleppo.

From Istanbul one can go north by steamer instead of westwards by rail. This is a little longer but I was told in Istanbul that it is a cheaper and more interesting route to Budapest, if the traveller is going there. (Budapest is not, of course, on the through Simplon Orient route, but we made a diversion here.) One takes steamer from Istanbul to the railway terminus port on the Black Sea, and from there travels to Bucharest, capital of Roumania. This brings in additional ground off the usual run, and for the journey from Bucharest there is a good train service. In his book *A Wayfarer in Hungary*, Mr. G. A. Birmingham suggests that everyone ought to come into Hungary by way of Istanbul or Belgrade, the idea being that they provide such a contrast to the ordered efficiency of Hungary. His book was written some time ago and the "contrast" is lessening considerably. Mr. Charles Cunningham in his "*What I saw in Hungary*" thinks that in this respect Roumania makes a good substitute for Turkey or Jugoslavia: from his experiences one would imagine a much better contrast! When he placed his feet on the opposite seat from sheer desperation at the slowness of the train, a guard came along and demanded a fine of 700 lei, nearly a pound then. Mr. Cunningham's objections resulted in his having to fill up a form giving birthday, names of father and mother, and whether he had ever been in prison, and if so where. The form was completed and nothing more heard of the matter. He thinks the explanation may be in the story that the Roumanian guard could at that time take fifty per cent. of what he made in fines!

There are numerous diversions and alternative routes

including the main route through Germany, but these are so obvious that one may leave the reader to discover them from a map and railway folder. In any event, it is easier and cheaper to make up your mind about it before you start—though not essential.

## CHAPTER VII.

# OVERLAND ROUTE IN 1800 BY CARRIAGE AND HORSEBACK.

THE train passenger who glides over the desert in cool comfort nowadays may well reflect on the hazardous journey which our forefathers undertook before the age of steam. That the more adventurous could do the journey by land instead of by sailing ship around the Cape is shown by an old and faded diary which Mr. S. T. Sheppard, the popular former Editor of *The Times of India*, kindly gave to me. Its yellowed pages with the neat manuscript breathe romance and adventure in each chapter, telling of encounters with well-known people in the capitals of Europe, a personal audience with the Sultan at the Porte, and narrow escapes from desert brigands in Asia during this wearying journey from London to Bombay. Mr. Bruce left London on 22nd July, 1800, and arrived in Bombay on 31st January, 1801.

The European part of the journey was *via* Hamburg, Berlin, Dresden, Vienna, thence along the Danube to Bucharest and on to Varna on the Black Sea. From here Mr. Bruce sailed to Constantinople through a pretty bad storm, and from Constantinople he rode, dressed as a Turk, to Baghdad. He floated down to Basra, and thence to Bombay, from which port he took another boat to Cannanore, and rode across India to Madras, to embark for Calcutta. The account of the journey across India in the days of the Peshwa is pregnant with descriptive detail, particularly of the Tippu wars in Mysore.

In Asia Minor the first part of the route lies well to the north of the present overland rail route which cuts through the Taurus Mountains ; but once Mr. Bruce reached what is now northern Iraq, his track seems to have been almost the same as that along which we came. The smells of oil and the great towers of flame in the oil fields, the flights of sandgrouse,

the "adventurous bits" of the road—these and many other details are the same to-day as they were then, and the comparison affords fascinating reading. Mr. Bruce records that up to Constantinople "the whole of my expenses, travelling and amusements included, amounted to three hundred and seven pounds sterling." For the journey on to Bombay he engaged a *tattur*, or Government courier, to take him the 1,400 miles to Baghdad, and paid him one thousand piastres for himself and four hundred piastres for his servant. It cost five hundred more to equip himself with Turkish dress, saddle, etc., and he spent about eight hundred more from Baghdad to Basra, so that his expenses from Constantinople to Basra were 2,700 piastres, or nearly three hundred pounds of then English money. Total : £607 from London to Basra.

The *tattur* supplied him with horses, provisions and lodging all the way. He took no merchandise without Mr. Bruce's leave, and he or his servant undertook to remain by Bruce in case of sickness or accident until they arrived at Baghdad. In return, Mr. Bruce consented to go at any time of the day or night the *tattur* thought proper, for the state of the country sometimes necessitated forced marches or lengthy waits in various spots.

The diarist further records that small horses and good goers of about 13 to 14 hands were plentiful between Constantinople and Mardin ; but between Mardin and Baghdad they were not so plentiful. He found the Turkish saddles and bridles were good, "bearing a great deal of fatigue," but observes that people attempting the journey with English saddles generally threw these aside. Provisions were plentiful and excellent, and a traveller could "live as he pleased." But as Mr. Bruce found some inconvenience in getting European cooking, he "partook of the fare of the country," as others did, and he describes this fare as "remarkably good."

As might be expected in those days Bruce found lodgings "extremely indifferent," and he carried a mattress and a carpet on a baggage horse, "laid them down in the cleanest part of the room, and stayed as little within doors as possible." He required a horse for himself, another for his servant, another for the baggage, and one spare, beside the horse the postboy rode. He speaks much of the inevitable delays through taking up and shedding merchandise en route, and adds that a "traveller should arm himself with two brace of pistols and a sword ; such things are acceptable presents to a *tattur* after the journey when they behave well."

A sidelight on the Turkish Government's inability to control the more distant parts of then Turkey is contained in the following parting bit of advice to future travellers :—

"I need only add that you should have passports and *phirmaunds* from Constantinople and elsewhere, wherever you think it desirable ; but *never* show them until money is of no avail, for there are many places, particularly in the interior, where the people show the greatest disrespect to the Ottoman Government, and do not hesitate to tread the *phirmaunds* under feet, as also detain you to show their utter disregard to the superior government."

At Yarmouth, where he embarked in July, 1800, Mr. Bruce relates how he met one Mr. Griffiths, who had travelled overland to India and gave useful advice. He should take as few people as possible, dress as the Turks do, and arm himself with "forbearance against the insolence of the Turk, who are apt to lavish abuse on Christians and other unbelievers ; and as for provisions, I need only take a cheese and wine, for in most places I should find plenty."

A few extracts and summaries of Mr. Bruce's adventures and experiences may be given. Vienna was reached by September and he gives a pen picture of life in that then-gay capital. He visited the "Cabinet of Natural Curiosities,"





Photo officially supplied.

*The Fishers' Bastion and Coronation Church at Budapest.*



*Beautiful Hungarian costumes seen in the villages. Note the jewellery.*

*Elizabeth Bridge, Budapest.*

Both photos officially supplied.



full of stuffed birds and beasts, where he met Lord Nelson and Sir W. and Lady Hamilton. Later on he mentions that the Queen of Naples wanted Nelson to have "his likeness taken" and as Her Majesty had conferred so many honours on him he could not very well decline this disagreeable process, so that His Lordship lay with a wet composition of plaster on his face.

Apparently Baden was even then famous, for our diarist records a visit to the hot baths there in company with Mr. Holland. It was here in the Casino Room that he saw what he calls "waltizing" for the first time.

Lord Nelson wrote letters to Colombo of which Mr. Bruce took charge, and after dining with Lord Minto one evening Bruce prepared to leave. He rode to Offina, the capital of that part of Hungary and the residence of "the Palatine," one of the Emperor's brothers, and he remarks on the abundance of the cherry and mulberry trees, and the industrious and healthy appearance of the Hungarians. But a few days further east on his journey he writes of a desolate country with dirty and unkempt inhabitants who wore greasy sheepskin garments. Further on he found himself in the dense forests of Transylvania, infested with robbers who lived on game and plundered travellers when they couldn't get venison. He noted the smart headdresses of the country girls, with their hair neatly fastened and a rose placed on the right ear.

In these parts oilskins took the place of glass in the windows, and he noted women in white turbans . . . "but my attention could not long be fixed on any object, so furiously did the driver take me, a proceeding which broke every cup and plate in my canteen, and shattered my wheels . . ." As the roads grew worse he had constant trouble with his wheels, and our friend seemed to be constantly sending for the wheelwright at various halting places. The traveller who thinks it hard to get in or out of Eastern countries nowadays will smile at Mr. Bruce's description of how he had to enter

quarantine and have his pulse examined at the Turkish frontier. Later on, before entering Baghdad, he was to be fumigated, and this fumigation seems to have been taken as a matter of course.

He had now entered Wallachia, described as a Turkish dominion, where he found a "messenger in the pay of the Prince of Bucharyst, the Waywodar or Governor of the Province." The messenger gave Mr. Bruce a letter expressing the Prince's wish to see him later, and adding that all the postmasters en route had had orders to supply him with cattle or horses at the Prince's or the public expense. Alas, Mr. Bruce says this proved unfortunate, for the people gave him the worst horses when they were not to be paid or shunned him ! So much for state guests in 1800 !

Good horses must have been essential for such a journey, for we read in the next few pages of night journeys through woods which resounded with the noise of wolves, and sometimes across chasms over which planks had been placed without railings. After this tribulation Mr. Bruce was rewarded by his visit to the Prince in Bucharest, where they conversed in French, partaking of coffee and sweetmeats. Before he left he distributed the "usual donation of small pieces of silver among the servants." Mr. Bruce adds anent his whole stay in the city that the Prince had insisted on entertaining him at his expense, but he was expected to make a present to one Markelius, which in point of value was more than board and lodging could have amounted to ! And afterwards they had to deplore the loss of a number of little but useful things pilfered from them by the common people. Such thefts now continued along the route to the Black Sea, and poor Bruce relates first in one place how all the carriage ropes disappeared, then some valuable books, and later pieces of harness, etc.

At Varna he settled with the captain of a Turkish vessel to take them to Constantinople, the sum agreed being

subscribed jointly with a King's Messenger and certain Russian prisoners . . . a hundred piastres on condition that the ship took no more cargo. Bruce says he would have preferred the land journey of twelve days, but for the fact that it was “through a woody country and dangerous from the state of society,” against the four days' sea journey. The hold of the Turkish vessel smelt abominably—not surprising for we read it was filled exclusively with hides and tallow. A storm grew into a gale, and the gale grew into a violent tempest, while the ship was “driven with the greatest velocity down the rapid outlet from the Black Sea at the mouth of the Bosphorous.” So our Mr. Bruce was not sorry to end this little “cruise” and meet his brother who lived in a village outside the Porte.

The picture of Pera in those days is not a pleasant one. The streets are described as abominably filthy, houses crowded together and mostly built of wood, and full of “uncleanly people.” As a contrast we have a picture of Ottoman splendour, when the “Grand Signior” went in state to consecrate a mosque. After the sounding of cannon had announced His Sublime Majesty's approach in the state barge, he disembarked and mounted a magnificent horse. But alas, the crowd obscured the royal view, and our friend saw only high feather caps or helmets. The suite was clothed with rich brocades and a variety of showy dresses, and combined with the gay colours of the crowd—scarlet, yellow, light blue, green—there was apparently what the modern reporter would call a colourful and brilliant spectacle.

Again another contrast, when the next page of this faded writing speaks of the “shambles of the Seraglio, which are certainly well placed, but filling the locality with a disagreeable effluvia which impregnated the whole air.”

Mr. Bruce describes how in the bazaars of Pera he was pelted with oranges by Turkish boys because he was so obviously a Christian—not the sole occasion when he records

such incidents. He adds that the laws were not properly enforced—at least such was the general complaint, the rich paying with a fine what the poor had to lose their lives for. The “Grand Signior, the Captain Bashaw, the Chief Eunuch and the Grand Vizier all had the power of life and death.” Mr. Bruce gives an instance of Turkish justice by the Bashaw of Tribizone who had before him a soldier accused of killing another in an affray. Apparently there was insufficient evidence, so the Bashaw ordered the accused soldier to be buried alive with the corpse, so that both could “appear before the Almighty who alone was now able to judge between them.”

The description of the visit to the Sultan, called throughout the “Grand Signior,” is interesting. The party was mostly of foreign ambassadors, and there were long waits at various doors and gates. At the apartments of the Grand Vizier they were presented with 14 trays of too-savoury dishes of meat, which our friends were unable to eat through their richness. They then had to be suitably arrayed in long *pelices*, and these preliminaries over, a servant informed the Grand Signior that the “infidels being clothed and fed by the bounty of the Sultan, are fit to appear before him when he chose to call them.”

“We followed the Vizier, and were each handed into the room by two persons dressed in rich brocade, and then taken through a long gallery or passage on each side of which were white eunuchs of all ages, and presented to the Sultan. He had a melancholy expression in his countenance, which the opaque light of the apartment reflected from little windows at the top of the room. He was seated on the side of a small bed covered with rich embroideries and fringed with pearls. The Minister’s address in Italian was explained by an interpreter, and the Vizier made a reply with the approbation of the Sultan, on which we took our leave.”

After leaving Constantinople Mr. Bruce travelled along

a route which is given, with times and distances, at the end of this chapter, as it may prove of material interest to those who know Asia Minor. In Asmanjike he saw women going about the streets with masks made of reeds fastened together and painted black.

As they went along, various other travellers joined for the sake of safety—and eventually they became a young caravan. They finally numbered the inauspicious total of 13, but all well armed, for there lived in these parts a famous bandit who levied toll on all he encountered, according to their wealth. This Dick Turpin was named Chatteraul and was greatly feared. Chatteraul was a big landowner who was in rebellion against the Ottoman Government, and various Bashaws had in vain been commanded to bring him to book. At several bad spots where ambushes were easy, and where obstructions could easily be placed across the road or path, the party expected to have a showdown with Chatteraul. But they reached the end of their march, when they learned that there had just been a skirmish and two of Chatteraul's men had been carried off. That gentleman was very wroth and had vowed vengeance.

It was at Hassan Patnik camp that the party were celebrating their escape from encountering so dreaded a bandit, when Chatteraul himself walked in with his armed men! He was indeed wroth, vowing vengeance against those who had taken his men, who had merely attended his flocks of sheep and had nothing to do with his other activities; and declared he would burn the village and would not allow any traveller to pass without levying heavier toll than usual!

The way in which the party extricated themselves was neat and diplomatic. They agreed eventually to carry to the Governor a letter from Chatteraul "demanding" the release of his men, and to point out verbally that the countryside being what it was, it would be better for those men to be

released ! On this condition Chatteraul agreed to let them go without toll, but as a parting shot he informed a traveller ; " Friend, you come from Sewas to buy merchandise, and have, I believe, 25,000 piastres in gold in your saddle. I have been expecting you for some days. I am glad to make you welcome ....I shall do you no harm." And the man was left alone as a mark of Chatteraul's goodwill !

Mr. Bruce then gained a different opinion of this Turkish Dick Turpin, describing him as a handsome and manly fellow who merely suffered from the oppression of the bad Turkish government, and refused to submit. The toll he levied on travellers was no more than a duty such as that levied on baggage and merchandise in other countries.

But the party were not so fortunate with Kurdish bandits near Evril, a village by the Zarp river. As they approached the end of the march they sent on the servant to prepare for their reception, as was customary. Hardly had he left them before the party were alarmed by the sound of shots, and riding hard they came upon the servant defending himself with his brace of pistols against four robbers, who at once retired. The robbers had, however, been able to cut off the portmanteau from the servant's horse. This was a heavy loss, for the bag contained considerable sums of money and—valuables. Several of the party volunteered to go after the robbers, but though they scoured the countryside until 8 p.m. they found no trace of them.

The officers of the Baghdad government got busy about this event and it speaks volumes for the then police of Baghdad that several days afterwards the stolen goods were recovered ! This happy event resulted from a man being seen with a bullet wound in his cheek which he could not explain, and he proved to be one of the robbers whom the servant had shot with a pistol. One wonders whether in like circumstances loot in Kurdistan would be recovered to-day !

The oil wealth of Iraq was even then known, but in the





*Typical Kurd photographed near Mosul.*



*Bedouin tents seen from the Mosul Tel-Kochek road.*

*Paris has not yet discovered the Kurdish hat !*



diary there is hardly any realisation of the extent of this "liquid gold." The diarist records that after leaving Alton Kuffree they came across what he terms oil pits, exuding thick oil used in lamps ; or as a thick varnish for the bottom of boats. These pits were farmed out by the Bashaw for 10,000 piastres a year ! The springs yielded about 50 okes a day, an oke being in weight equal to about three English pounds. Mr. Bruce refers to the most offensive smell—that odour which must later have been so welcome in the nostrils of oil prospectors ! He then came across what he terms a burning hill " constantly on fire without any perceptible consumption of the parts affected !"

At Kirkuk, the terminus of the railway when we went through, he refers to the luxuriance of grain, olives, mulberries and vines.

Further south there are many references to lions, and on more than one occasion our traveller saw these animals. The first reference is at Musumber Khan, where he found the greatest poverty imaginable, side by side with well-tilled land—an apparent sign of government oppression.

At Baghdad Mr. Bruce contrasts the inferior merchandise in the covered bazaar with the better goods to be seen at Constantinople. Here they crossed the river on the bridge of basket boats, which he likens to the corails of Yorkshire—evidently the *guffas*.

He galloped out to see the Tower of Babel, described as of sunburnt bricks, with layers of straw between and bound together with slime. He notes the furrows made in the tower by rain, and thinks the original height as given, 126 feet, must have been lessened by the rain. He adds that the real Tower of Babel was more probably built at Babylon, and that the tower at which he looked was more likely a tower built for astronomical researches, at which the Babylonians excelled. Babylon itself he was unable to visit during his

journey to Basra by boat, for the Arabs were then at war with the Turks, and the country unsafe.

Even then Baghdad had its present cosmopolitan character, for the traveller notes that many languages could be heard in its bazaars. In the house where he stayed there were twelve tongues spoken—English, French, Portuguese, Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Greek, Italian, Hebrew, Armenian, Hindustani and Mahratti. The wines of Baghdad he sampled and described as excellent, lacking only age to mature them. En route to Basra, the boat sent messages back to Baghdad by pigeons, and he tested out this pigeon post with excellent results. His bird carried a message to a friend 300 miles, and the note was replied to in Bombay immediately after his arrival. Iraq's first airmail !

The route from Constantinople to Baghdad by this early traveller is given as follows, with the times in hours alongside :—

11	November, 1800	..	..	30	miles to Jebela	..	..	8	hrs.
12	"	..	..	30	" " Ismit	..	..	8	"
13	"	..	..	54	" " Hindak	..	..	12	"
14	"	..	..	24	" " Dschea	..	..	6	"
15	"	..	..	60	" " Jeridare	..	..	16	"
16	"	..	..	21	" " Bainer	..	..	4	"
17	"	..	..	63	" " Cogisate	..	..	15	"
18	"	..	..	54	" " Hadja	..	..	11	"
19	"	..	..	66	" " Marsewan	..	..	15	"
20	"	..	..	48	" " An old Khan	..	..	9	"
21	"	..	..	42	" " Tokat	..	..	8	"
24	"	..	..	33	" " Kaskoon	..	..	7	"
25	"	..	..	45	" " A village	..	..	11	"
26	"	..	..	45	" " Al Hadji Khan	..	..	14	"
27	"	..	..	21	" " Hafsan Chilliby	..	..	5	"
28	"	..	..	12	" " Akum Khan	..	..	3	"
29	"	..	..	40	" " Malatia	..	..	8	"
30	"	..	..	62	" " Kiseruch	..	..	16	"
1	December	..	..	54	" " Arjena	..	..	12	"
2	"	..	..	48	" " Diarbeka	..	..	10	"
3	"	..	..	24	" " A village	..	..	6	"

4	December	..	..	30	miles to Mardin	..	8 hrs.
5	"	..	..	36	" " Nisibin	..	10 "
6	"	..	..	26	" " Desert Camp	..	7 "
7	"	..	..	28	" " Do.	..	9 "
8	"	..	..	42	" " Okrar	..	14 "
9	"	..	..	54	" " Karakoosh	..	13 "
10	"	..	..	66	" " Alton Kuffree	..	13 "
12	"	..	..	51	" " Tack	..	10 "
13	"	..	..	66	" " Karatapa	..	11 "
14	"	..	..	51	" " Mosumbha Khan	11	"
15	"	..	..	21	" " Dowkala	..	3 "
16	"	..	..	21	" " Baghdad	..	4 "

*Total from Constantinople to Baghdad, about 1,350 miles.*

\* \* \*

Before setting off on his journey from Bombay to Calcutta, Mr. Bruce relates how his friend Mr. Nisbit gave an entertainment at Signiora da Monta, a church beautifully situated on high ground almost opposite Mahim, and on the Island of Salsette, "much frequented by gentlemen disposed to make parties of pleasure from Bombay." He says it was the first time he had ever dined in a church, but as divine service was now not performed there, it "did not signify."

Readers may pardon a brief mention of his adventures across India, for they may throw new light on conditions in those days. He rode to Poona, the residence of the Peishwa. The Ram Rajah, the acknowledged sovereign, was then a prisoner in the Satara Fort, "kept there by the influence of the Brahmins, who direct the helm of the Empire." In the evening he and Colonel Palmer went on a visit to Gopal Rau, the favourite minister of the Peishwa, who gave an entertainment in honour of his nephew's wedding.

• Later, Mr. Bruce had to return to Bombay and abandon his idea of going across India over the Deccan from Poona. When he got back to Bombay he described the cane houses he noticed on the Esplanade Maidan. These were erected in the hot weather, to catch the sea breezes, and on the usual fixed day, the cane houses were all struck and carried away.

He sailed to Cannanore, and struck off eastwards, spending considerable time in Seringapatam. At this point the diary is embellished with plans of the palaces there, and paintings of the mural decorations at the Lal Baug Palace. There are some stories about Tippu which confirm the reputation that ruler had for savage cruelty. On one occasion he ordered about a dozen prisoners of war, who had hitherto been treated considerately during their confinement, to be lined up on parade at Seringapatam, where they were blown from the cannon mouth. The soldiery were exasperated by this unnecessary display of cruelty, and the senior commanding officer expressed his sorrow at having to carry out such an order. On this Tippu had him also blown from the cannon mouth.

From Madras, where Mr. Bruce stayed six weeks with a bout of fever, he embarked aboard the ship *Neptune*, and reached Calcutta in June, 1801—just eleven months after he left London !

Here's a health to the memory of Friend Bruce. I wonder whether any intrepid horseman would care to do his journey nowadays ?

## APPENDIX.

This Appendix consists of miscellaneous information regarding the train journey, and some of the countries which may be visited, extracted from various folders which happened to be in the possession of the Author. It is felt such information may be of value to the traveller, but for various reasons no attempt has been made to make the information exhaustive. Countries like Switzerland, Italy and France have been neglected because most travellers either know them well or have more than sufficient information available from various sources. As for train timings, etc., these data are subject to such fluctuations that their inclusion would be of little permanent value, and they have consequently been omitted.

It is emphasized that the information regarding fares, taxis, foreign currency regulations and tourist money, was collected when this book was written in 1937, and some fluctuations are, of course, inevitable.

### THROUGH FARES.

*These fares were in force when this book was written. It should be noted they are subject to variation.*

The Iraq Railways and the International Sleeping Car Company, in conjunction with the other administrations interested, have brought into operation special through tickets at the following reduced rates.

	1st Class.	2nd Class.
Basrah to London.. ..	£ 34 0 0	*£ 25 0 0
Baghdad to London ..	£ 32 0 0	*£ 24 0 0
Sleeping Car Tickets Tel		
• Kotchek to Boulogne ..	£ 14 3 0	£ 10 10 0
Meals on Trains Basrah to		
Paris including Rest		
House at Mosul ..	£ 6 0 0	....

\*Passengers booking second class through tickets, on making an additional payment of £2-13 from Basrah and £1-6 from Baghdad may travel first class in Iraq. It should be noted that when travelling by

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International Sleeping Car Coy. from Tel Kotehek onwards first class passengers are given a compartment alone and second class passengers share a two berth compartment.

### GROUP FARES.

Group fares for parties of six and over, irrespective of first and second class, with a reduction of 40 per cent. for both Rail and Wagons-Lits Supplement are in force from Basrah, Baghdad, Khanaqin City, Kirkuk and Mosul to Paris and London.

### SEA PASSAGE FARES.

	1st Class.	2nd Class.	Deck.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Bombay to Basrah ..	315	210	49*
Karachi to Basrah ..	284	189	39*

\* By the *Subsidiary Mail* the corresponding deck fares are Rs. 62 and Rs. 50 respectively.

*The above fares are only given as a rough guide to those interested in the Overland Route and are subject to alteration without notice.*

### GENERAL TRAIN INFORMATION.

**Luggage.**—Luggage may be registered through from Basra, Baghdad and Kirkuk to all the principal Stations *en route*. A free allowance of 30 kilos on *registered* luggage is given for both First and Second Class passengers over the following Railways. Children travelling at half fare are allowed 20 kilos only :—

Iraq Railways.

Syrian Railways.

Turkish Railways (except between Haidar Pasha and Istanbul Stations).

Oriental, French and English Railways.

No free allowance is given on other Railways, parties to the through route.

Over the rail portion of the Iraq Railways system, *i.e.*,



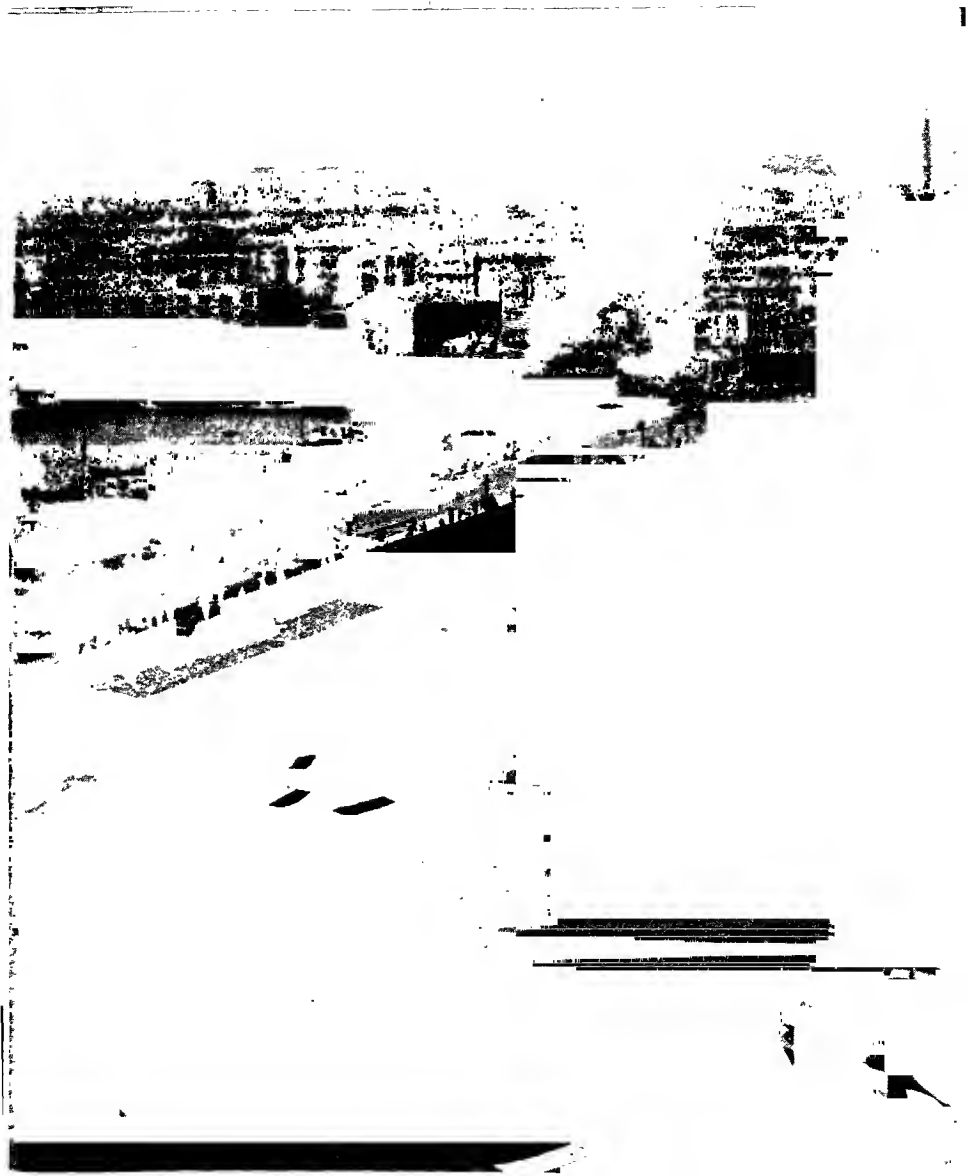


Photo officially supplied.

*The Galata Bridge, Istanbul.*



*Turkish girls at drill during a big sporting festival.*

*Institute of Hygiene, Ankara.*

Both photos officially supplied.



up to Kirkuk only, a further allowance is given on "hand luggage" to make up a total of—

- (a) 60 kilos per adult First Class passenger.
- (b) 30 kilos per child First Class passenger.
- (c) 40 kilos per adult Second Class passenger.
- (d) 20 kilos per child Second Class passenger.

All baggage, including hand luggage, is weighed and is taken into account in connection with the free allowance, the excess weight being charged as under :—

			Rs. a.	
Between Tel Kohek and Kirkuk	..	..	1 0	} Per 10 kilos or part.
Between Tel Kohek and Baghdad	..	..	1 11	
Between Tel Kohek and Maqil (Basra)	..	..	2 13	

In respect of registered luggage, *i.e.*, luggage booked through from Basra (Maqil), Baghdad and Kirkuk to Stations in Europe and for which through tickets have been issued, a registration fee as under will be charged by the Iraq Railways over and above the conveyance charges leviable beyond Tel Kohek :—

		Per consign- ment. Rs. a.
(1) In case of registration to or from Kirkuk and Baghdad	.. .. .	1 8
(2) In case of registration to or from Basra	..	3 0

*Availability.*—Periods vary with the length of journey. From Baghdad to a few of the more important Stations they are as under :—

							Days available.
Aleppo	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
Istanbul	..	..	..	..	..	..	13
Sofia	..	..	..	..	..	..	22
Belgrade	..	..	..	..	..	..	25
Trieste	..	..	..	..	..	..	30
Venice	..	..	..	..	..	..	31
Milan	..	..	..	..	..	..	33
Lausanne	..	..	..	..	..	..	35
Paris	..	..	..	..	..	..	38
London	..	..	..	..	..	..	42

**Children.**—Under four years of age free, if no separate seat or berth is claimed. From four to ten years half Railway rates, *plus* certain small taxes, but full Sleeping Car supplement is charged, a separate berth being provided. Two children may occupy the same Sleeping Car berth on payment of one full supplement.

**Reservation of Accommodation.**—Reservation is necessary from Baghdad onward in order to avoid disappointment. Sleeping Car accommodation is limited and as much notice as possible should be given by intending passengers. Telegrams in regard to reservation are a charge against the passenger.

**Timings of Trains.**—The through service at present is twice weekly in the summer and three times weekly in the winter in both directions. Details of timings to the principal Stations and information in respect of connections *via* Vienna to Ostend and London and *via* Budapest to Prague and Berlin may be obtained on application from the Traffic Manager, Iraq Railways, Baghdad, or any office of agents.

**Meals.**—Through fares include all meals *en route* as between Baghdad North—Nisibin, including those on the road portion of the journey, *plus* meals and accommodation at the Rest House at Mosul. From Nisibin onwards meals are provided by the International Sleeping Car Company.

**Passports.**—Passengers from Iraq for England by the direct route pass through the undermentioned countries, for which their Passports must be in order :—

IRAQ	YUGO-SLAVIA
SYRIA	ITALY
TURKEY	SWITZERLAND
BULGARIA	FRANCE

**Visas** can be obtained in Baghdad from the British Consul, the French Consul, the Turkish *Chargé d’Affairs* and the Italian Consul.

The *visas* for Bulgaria and Yugo Slavia can be obtained on the Simplon-Orient Express at SVILINGRADE and TZARIBROD.

The approximate cost :—

							Rs. a.
Bulgaria	..	..	..	..	..	..	10 0
Yugo Slavia	..	..	..	..	..	..	3 4
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

### IRAQ.

Iraq Currency.				Value in Sterling.		
				£	s.	d.
1000 Fils to One Dinar	..	..	..	1	0	0
NOTES (small) : One Dinar (blue)	..	..	..	1	0	0
Half „ (brown)	..	..	..	0	10	0
Quarter „ (Green)	..	..	..	0	5	0
COINS : Silver—Fils 200	..	..	..	0	4	0
„ 50	..	..	..	0	1	0
„ 20	..	..	..	0	0	5
Nickel—Fils 10	..	..	..	0	0	2½
„ 4	..	..	..	0	0	1
Copper—Fils 2	..	..	..	0	0	0½
„ 1	..	..	..	0	0	0¼

Taxi Rates.

By arrangement.

Customary gratuities.

(Hotels 10 per cent. on accounts.)

The following information on Iraq is extracted from the Iraq State Railways' handbook "Iraq."

### REST HOUSES.

Railway Rest Houses have been provided for the use of tourists at the following stations :—

MAQIL (Basra).

UR JUNCTION—for those visiting Ur of the Chaldees.

DIWANIYAH.

HILLAH—for those visiting Babylon, Kish, Birs Nimrud.

KHANAQIN—for those visiting Persia, the Oil Fields, etc.

MOSUL—for Nineveh, etc.

(Reservation telegrams from stations free of charge.)

Each Rest House is fitted with furniture, bedding, crockery, glass, napery, and cooking utensils, etc., and a cook is available who will supply meals as required at the following rates, provided sufficient notice is given :—

					Rs.	a.	p.
Early Tea	..	..	..	..	0	12	0
Breakfast	..	..	..	..	2	8	0
Lunch	..	..	..	..	2	8	0
Tea ..	..	..	..	..	0	12	0
Dinner	..	..	..	..	3	8	0

The normal charge for the use of these Rest Houses is Rs. 3 per person per 24 hours or part thereof, plus a charge of Rs. 2 for bedding if used.

These rooms are fitted with electric light and fans.

#### BEDDING.

Passengers wishing to make use of sets of bedding whilst travelling on the train may do so on application to the Station Master in advance of entraining. Fee Rs. 2 per set per night. These sets of bedding are available at Maqil, Baghdad West, Baghdad North and Kirkuk Stations. All Rest Houses are equipped in this respect.

#### BREAK OF JOURNEY.

Holders of tickets for distances of more than one hundred miles may break journey for 24 hours for every one hundred miles in addition to the time occupied by the journey. The break of journey may be made at one or more places on the journey. Passengers intending to break journey should inform the Booking Clerk when booking their luggage in order that the names of the stations may be entered on the luggage ticket.

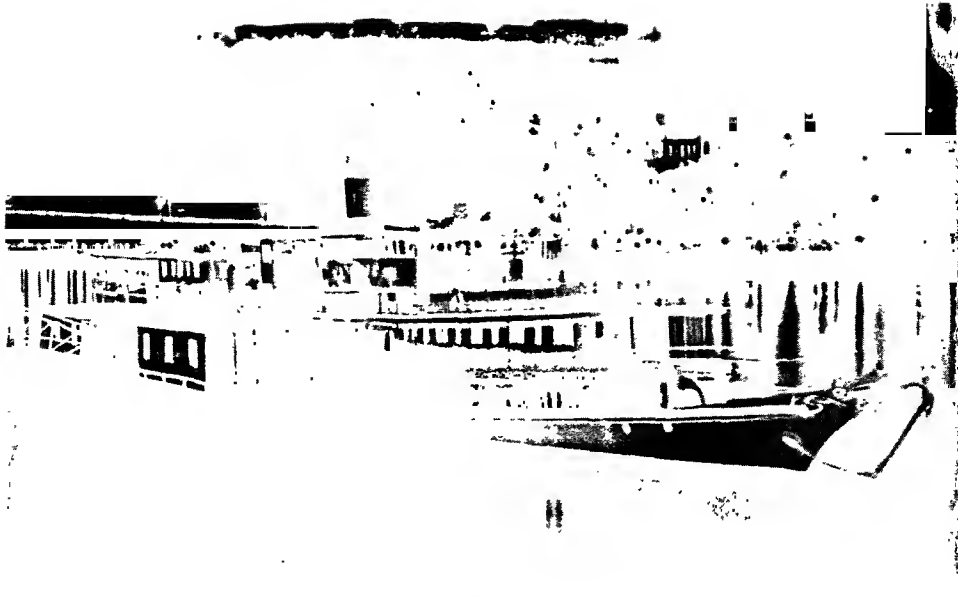
**N.B.**—Passengers breaking journey are required to have their tickets endorsed or date stamped by the Station Master when they alight.

**SUMMARY OF IRAQ CENTRES from which to Visit Places of Interest.**



Photo officially supplied.

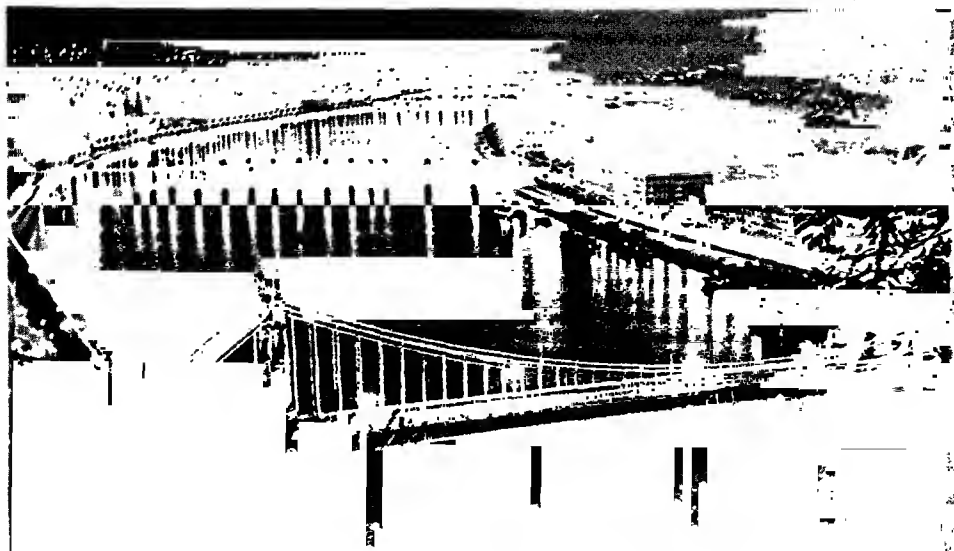
*The beginning of a village dance at Mezokovesd in Hungary.*



*The old fortress at Budapest by night.*

*Budapest looks most attractive by night, especially from the hill above.*

Photo officially supplied.





The centre from which to visit the places of interest is shown in capital letters and the names of the places to be visited from that centre are shown below :—

#### UR JUNCTION.

By train from Basra, 123 miles, or from Baghdad, 230 miles—regular service with dining cars.

Stay at Railway Rest House.

Taxis can be obtained from Nasiriyah (10 miles away) if required.

- (i) Ur of the Chaldees—20 minutes walk from Rest House.
- (ii) Tal al Ubaid—4 miles from Rest House.
- (iii) Abu Shahrain—14 miles from Rest House.
- (iv) Nasiriyah—10 miles by Railway.

#### KHIDHR.

By train from Baghdad, 193 miles, or from Basra, 160 miles.

Tourists staying at Khidhr will require a reserved saloon or large parties can be provided with carriages and a dining car by special arrangement.

Warka—10 miles from Station.

#### HILLAH.

By train from Basra, 287 miles, or from Baghdad, 66 miles—regular service with dining cars.

Stay at Railway Rest House. Taxis are available in town.

- (i) Babylon—3 miles from Rest House.
- (ii) Kish—14 miles from Rest House.
- (iii) Birs Nimrud (Borsippa) 7 miles from Rest House.

#### KARBALA.

By train from Basra, 329 miles, or from Baghdad, 69 miles—regular service with dining cars on main line trains. Branch off at Hindiya Junction and pass over the

Hindiya Barrage. There are no arrangements for food or accommodation at Karbala.

Tourists staying at Karbala will require a reserved saloon, or large parties can be provided with carriages and a dining car by special arrangement.

Taxis are available.

- (i) Karbala—10 minutes walk from Station.
- (ii) Najaf—50 miles from Karbala.
- (iii) Shifatha, and Fortress Palace of Ukhaidr—return journey 6 to 7 hours by car.

#### **BAIJI.**

By train from Baghdad, 132 miles.

Tourists staying at Baiji will require a reserved saloon.

Taxis come from Mosul to this station and are normally only available on the arrival or departure of trains.

The Station Master can, however, arrange for taxis at any time if given two or three days' notice.

- (i) Qalat Shargat and Asshur—57 miles from Baiji.
- (ii) Hatra—80 miles from Baiji.

#### **SAMARRA.**

By train from Baghdad, 73 miles.

A railway siding runs down to the river Tigris, which can be crossed by ferry to the town opposite.

No arrangements for food or accommodation.

Tourists staying at Samarra will require a reserved saloon.

- (i) Samarra.

#### **KIRKUK.**

By train from Baghdad, 200 miles—a regular service with dining cars.

A hotel is available in the town.

Taxis are available.

- (i) Tarkalan—14 miles.

(ii) Baba Gurgur—5 miles.

(iii) Arbil—63 miles.

### MOSUL.

About 6 hours run by car from Kirkuk. Accommodation can be obtained in the Railway Rest House.

(i) Nineveh, just outside the town.

(ii) Nimrud (Calah of Genesis x. 11).

(iii) Mar Behnam—half hour by car from Nimrud.

(iv) Bavian

(v) Al Kosh

(vi) Dohuk

} *Special arrangements are required to visit these places.*

### BAGHDAD.

Good hotels and taxis are available.

(i) Kadhimain—5 miles.

(ii) Ctesiphon and Seleucia—20 miles.

(iii) Agar Qaf—10 miles.

Town drive, old Baghdad, and Bazaars on foot. Museum. Kadhiman (Holy City), Arab Cemetery.

By *guffa* down the river.

### BASRA.

Drive through town and see bazaars, markets, Airport, then by boat ("balam") along canals and SHATT-el-ARAB, the local Grand Canal.

\* \* \* \*

## TURKEY.

### OLD ISTANBUL.

#### 1 HALF-DAY EXCURSION.

GALATA Bridge, with view of the GOLDEN HORN and the harbour entrance. ST. SOPHIA, converted into a Mosque in the 15th century by Mahomet II, and recently turned into a Museum of Byzantine Art; the underground Cistern of Yèrè-Batan-Seraglio, known as the Basilica Cistern, built by

Constantine the Great in the 4th century and rebuilt by Justinian in the 6th century ; the dried up Cistern of the "Thousand and One Columns," which probably dates from the 4th century ; the MOSQUE OF SULTAN AHMET or the BLUE MOSQUE (17th century) ; the ancient Hippodrome, with the Obelisk of Theodosius (erected at Heliopolis in 1547 B.C. and transported to Byzantium in 390 A.D. by Theodosius the Great), the Serpentine Column of the Delphi (478 B.C.), the Pyramid of Constantine VII (10th century) and the Fountain of William II. Visit the Museum of Antiquities or the Military Museum (collections of historic weapons including the sword of Mahomet II, the conqueror of Istanbul in 1453).

#### ISTANBUL WHOLE DAY EXCURSION.

GALATA Bridge, with view of the GOLDEN HORN and harbour entrance. Visit ST. SOPHIA ; the Basilica Cisterns ; the MOSQUE OF SULTAN AHMET, with its 6 minarets, or the BLUE MOSQUE ; Delphi, the Pyramid of Constantine VII and the Fountain of William II ; Bayazit Square, named after Sultan Bayazit, who was taken prisoner by Tamerlane in 1402 and died in captivity the following year ; the Tower and Mosque of Bayazit (Mosque of the Pigeons) ; the University built by Mahomet II ; the MOSQUE OF SOLIMAN THE MAGNIFICENT, the most celebrated of the Ottoman Sultans (16th century) ; the Aqueduct of Valens (378) ; the Gate of Andrianople, through which Mahomet II entered the town ; the Walls of Theodosius (splendid view of the GOLDEN HORN) ; the ancient Palace of Constantine VII and the KARIYE MOSQUE, a jewel of ancient Byzantium, celebrated for its mosaics.

Istikal Caddesi, formerly the Grand Rue de Pera and the Dolma-Bagtche Seraglio, OLD SERAGLIO, the former Palace of the Sultans with the famous treasure and the harem. This palace was commenced by Mahomet II in 1467 on the site of the ancient Acropolis of Byzantium, and was the residence of the Sultans until the beginning of the 19th century, when

they built palaces on the Bosphorus. Museum of Antiquities, the Military Museum and the Bazaars, where artisans have for centuries been producing wonderfully clever works of art.

(Old Seraglio is closed Wednesdays and Saturdays.)

## ISTANBUL AND SURROUNDINGS.

### THE BOSPHORUS AND THE GOLDEN HORN.

Leave Galata Bridge by boat for a trip along the Golden Horn to EYUB, the holy place of the Musalmans. Visit the Mosque, built by Mahomet II, where the investiture of the Sultans with the Holy Girdle took place. Visit the MAUSOLEUM of Eyub, the standard bearer of the Prophet ; also the characteristic and picturesque cemetery (marvellous panorama) and PIERRE LOTI's Hill.

Excursion by boat along both the enchanting banks of Europe and Asia, lined with villas and splendid palaces, passing the two Turkish FORTRESSES of RUMELI and ANADOL HISSAR (15th century). Arrive at KAVAK, at the entrance to the Black Sea, with its historic GENOESE castle. This excursion may be broken at ANADOL HISSAR (Asiatic bank) in order to visit the castle built by the Turks on their first arrival on the banks of the Bosphorus. (Excursion by row boat to the SWEET WATERS OF ASIA—This was formerly a favourite excursion of Turkish ladies).

### SCUTARI.

Leave the quay by boat and cross the Bosphorus to SCUTARI. Motor car tour of the town. Ascend the CHAMLIDJA Hill, affording a wonderful view of the whole town of Istanbul, the banks of the Bosphorus, the harbour entrance, the Sea of Marmara and the Princes' Islands. Descend through the KARADJA-AHMET cemeteries, the oldest in the world, dotted with cypress trees. Visit the Crimean War Memorial. Cross from HAYDARPASA and KADIKOY in order to visit MODA Point, where a wonderful view of the

Fanaraki Peninsula and Moda Bay, a centre for aquatic sports, can be obtained. Return to HAYDARPASA, and to ISTANBUL by boat through the Sea of Marmara and the Bosphorus.

\* \* \* \* \*

## HUNGARY.

The following miscellaneous information is extracted from folders supplied by the Hungarian Office for Tourisme (Ministry of Commerce) in Budapest, who issue the following folders :—

1. Hungarian Art Treasures.
2. 22 Excursions in Hungary.
3. Autocar excursions in Budapest and Hungary.
4. Gastronomic Hungary.
5. Hungary (Shooting).
6. Hungarian Horses.
7. Debrecen and the Pusztas at Hortobagy.
8. Hungarian Sunday ; (Peasant costumes, peasant art).
9. Lake Balaton.
10. The Hotels of Hungary.

**MUNICIPAL INFORMATION OFFICE : V., DEAK FERENC-UTCA 2.**

At the service of the public, free of charge : programmes of journeys and sightseeing, excursions for viewing Budapest and the neighbourhood, and the most interesting provincial centres ; passport and visa matters, etc. INFORMATION, ACCOMMODATION, GENTLEMAN AND LADY-GUIDES, prospectuses, etc. Telegrams : ESEFA BUDAPEST—Telephone (Interurban) : 813—49.

**TAXIS :—**

Fare for big car, 65 filler first 1000 metres and 25 filler for every additional 500 metres or fraction. For waiting, 25 filler every 6 minutes or fraction. Fare for small car, 65 filler first 1000 metres, 20 filler for every additional 500 metres or fraction, waiting, 20 filler each 6 minutes or fraction.

From 11 p.m. till 6 a.m. the Night tariff is charged, which is 15 per cent higher. Tip to the chauffeur 10—15 per cent.

PROGRAMME FOR SIX HALF-DAYS IN BUDAPEST :

*(Only licensed guides are authorised to officiate).*

1. Muzeum-korut, Municipal Gallery, the Municipality's luxurious S. Gellert Bath ; the Royal Palace (Királyi Palota), with its wealth of historical memorials, the Coronation Church (Koronazó-templom), with its famous spire, the most picturesque specimen of Hungarian architecture of the Middle-Ages, rich in gorgeous Oriental frescoes ; the Fishers' Bastion (Halászbástya), from where the entire City can be surveyed. (Morning drive. Ibusz Tour : Monday, Wednesday, Friday.)
2. The S. Stephen Basilica (Szent István Bazilika), the largest and most splendid church of Budapest ; the Andrássy-ut, the finest thoroughfare of the Metropolis ; the Museum of Fine Arts (Szépművészeti Múzeum), with its rich collection of Hungarian pictures and works of Old Masters ; the Városliget (City-Park) with the Agricultural Museum (Mezőgazdasági Múzeum), and the magnificent Szechenyi Strand-Bath ; the Vilma Királyné ut Avenue ; the Rakóczi-ut. (Morning drive. Ibusz Tour : Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday.)
3. The Szabadság (Liberty)-ter, the City's finest square ; the great Parliament Buildings ; the superb Entrance-Hall of the Supreme Court of Justice (Kúria) ; the S. Margaret Island (Márgitsziget), the pearl of the Metropolis, with its Strand-Bath and Hotels. (Afternoon drive. Monday, Wednesday, Friday.)
4. The Sváb-Hill ; thence through the delightful woodlands to János-Hill (Jánoshegy), the highest point, affording the finest view of the City and its surroundings.

(Afternoon excursion. Ibusz Tour : Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday).

5. For the 3rd day recommended : National Museum, Museum of Industrial Arts (Iparművészeti Múzeum).
6. In the Afternoon : S. Gellert-Hill. Half-an-hour's-walk, splendid view.

IBUSZ AUTO TOURS, daily, from Vorosmarty-ter (Gerbeaud Palace) at 9-30 and 3-30.

### EXCURSIONS.

Motor-car tours arranged by the Ibusz Co. V., Vigadó-utca 1, and the Autotaxi Co.

1. *Harmashatar-Hill*. Sunday afternoon autocar excursion of the Ibusz Co. at 3-30 p.m. from the Vigado. (Price 8 P.)
2. *Aquincum*, ruins of a Roman military station, trains every half-hour from Pálffy-ter (Plan F5), by local railway. (Train journey, half hour).
3. *Visegrad*, ruins of an ancient Royal Castle, 4 hours by steamer. Landing stage at the Dunapalota Hotel. Steamers leave at 8-30 a.m. or 2 p.m., returning at 7 p.m.—By rail only 40 minutes.
4. *Esztergom*, seat of the Hungarian Primate. Famous Cathedral. Medieval excavations. By steamer, 6 hours ; rail, 2 hours.

Recommended to leave at 8 a.m. from West Station, returning in the afternoon by boat. (Hotel : Furdoszallo).

5. *Godollo*. Royal Summer residence. Beautiful park. With local train from East Station 1 hour.
6. *Mezőkovácsháza*. Sunday excursion, whole day. With auto 150 km. Gorgeous peasant costumes. Visit the original MAV "Matyó" House. Railway journey, 2½ hours. Leave East Station 7-00 a.m., returning at 3-20 or 7-40



p.m. Near to Mezokovesd the interesting City of Eger. Regular Sunday motor-car excursion of the Ibusz Co. 7 a.m. 35 Pengo.

Short Motor tour from Budapest to Village *Boldog* (75 km).

7. *Lake Balaton*. Central Europe's greatest lake. Leave South Station at 7-30 a.m. Railway to Siofox, 2 hours. Thence by steamer to Balatonfured and Tihany and back to Siofok. Returning from there at 5-20 or 7-30 p.m. Also motor-car excursions.
8. *Szeged*, the most typical Hungarian town. Magnificent Cathedral and interesting University. Leave West Station at 7-50 a.m., returning at 5-50 p.m. Express train, 3 hours.
9. *Kecskemet*, centre of famous fruit-growing district. The "Pusztá" of Bugac. Train 2 hours. Same trains as to Szeged.
10. *Kekes-Hill* (1000 m.) in the Matra-Hills. Excursion from Gyongyos.
11. Recommended excursions also to *Kiskunhalas* (Hung. laces at the "Lace House" "Csipkehaz") and to *Kalocsa* (picturesque costumes on Sunday).

### TWO-DAY EXCURSIONS.

*Hortobagy Plain, Debrecen*, famous inn, picturesque herds of cattle, horse-stud. Express train to Debrecen 4 hours. (Recommended : Hotel Bika). Excellent hunting possibilities. (Hares, Wild-Geese). Leave West Station at 7-50 or at 2 p.m. Leave Debrecen by the local railway at 12-00 for Nagyhortobagy, visiting there the old "csarda." Returning at 6-40 p.m. Leaving Debrecen at 10-10 p.m. for Budapest. (Budapest-Hortobagy on Sunday, *via* Fuze-sabony, 1 day excursion. Leave East Station at 7-00 a.m., returning from Hortobagy at 4-50 p.m.

*Health-Resort Lillafured* with the splendid "Palace Hotel" property of the State, built in the style of an old Hungarian hunting-castle (excellent golf course, winter sports, etc.). Train journey  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours. Leave Budapest East Station at 7-00 a.m. or at 2 p.m. From Miskolc Station regular connection to the Palace Hotel. Returning from Miskolc next day at 7 p.m. arriving in Budapest at 10-22 p.m.

*Pecs.* Beautiful Cathedral. Famous factory of Zsolnay majolicas. Vineyards. Train journey 5 hours. Hotel : Nador.

### SHORT AUTO-EXCURSIONS.

*Fot* (Hung. village, beautiful church).—*Szentendre, Leanyfalu* (summer resorts on the Danube).—*Budafok* (wine-cellars) and *Kutyavilla-csarda* (a popular inn).

## VIENNA.

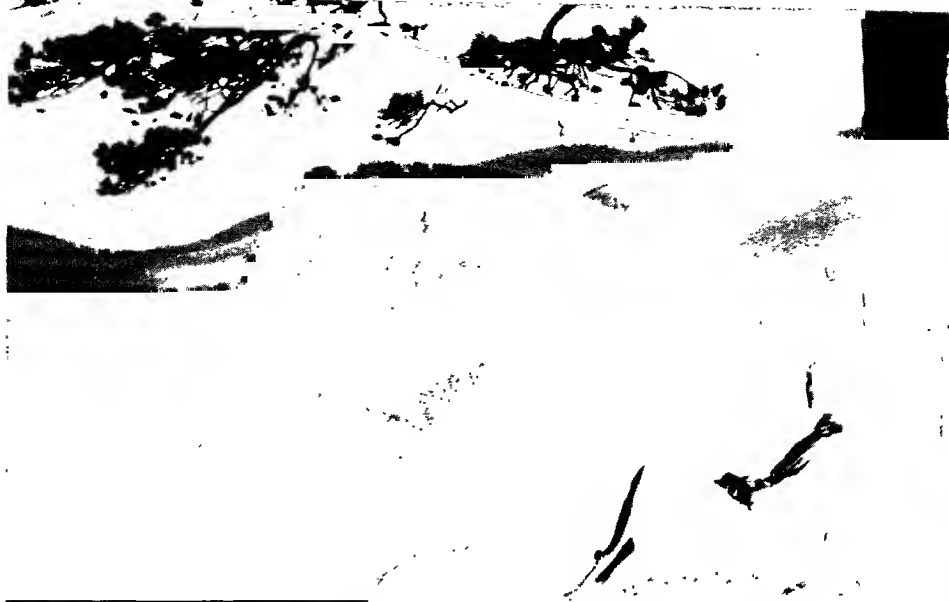
Miscellaneous tourist information extracted from folders issued by Vienna Municipal Board for Tourist Traffic :—

### ARRIVAL IN VIENNA.

**PORTERS' FEES :** For hand-luggage 20 Groschen per piece (minimum amount 30 Groschen). Other luggage 50 Groschen per 100 lbs. **Taxicabs :** 75 Groschen for the first third-of-a-mile, an additional 25 Groschen for every additional third-of-a-mile. Night tariff (from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m.) 75 Groschen for the first quarter-of-a-mile, 25 Groschen for every additional quarter-of-a-mile. These figures are replaced by One Schilling and 40 Groschen, respectively, in the case of handsomely equipped cabs displaying the sign "80-g-Tariff." More than three passengers (children under 10 years do not count) are charged the night tariff also during daytime. Additional charge for luggage stowed near the chauffeur's seat : One Schilling per piece but, irrespective of the number of pieces, not exceeding Two Schillings. No additional charge



Photo officially supplied by O. V. W.  
*Rural dance festival in Austria.*



*A beautiful view of the Semmering in Austria.*

*Popular tourist resort of Innsbruck, Maria-Theresienstrasse.*

Both photos officially supplied by O. V. W.



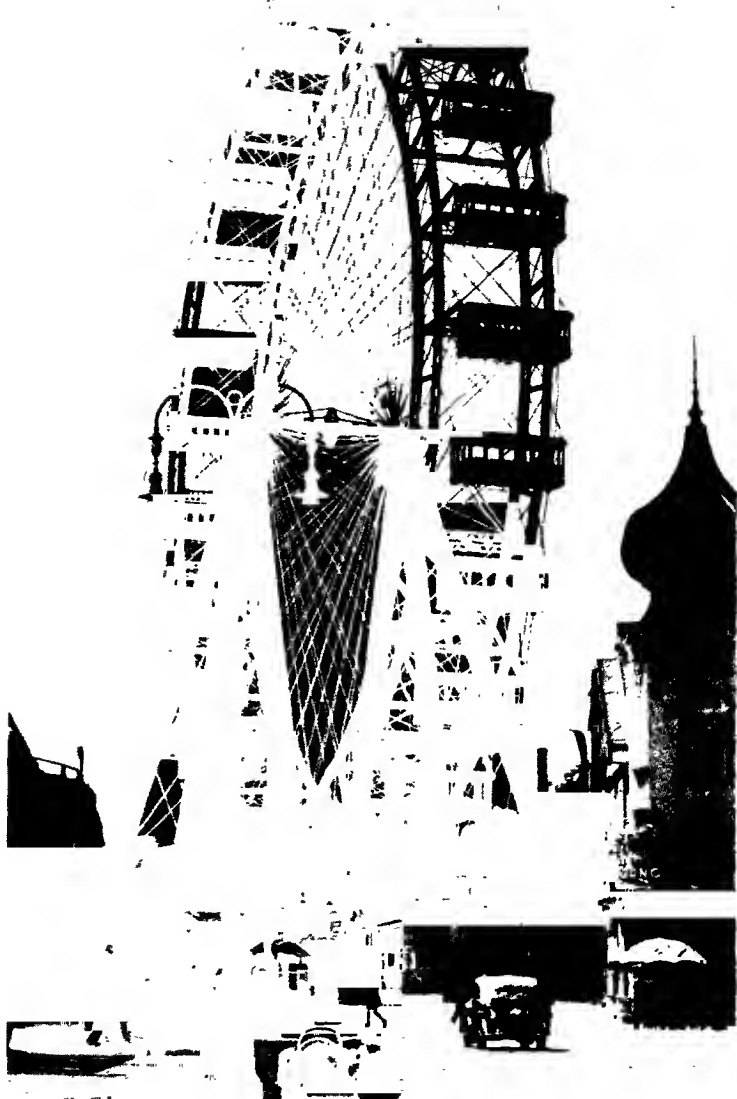
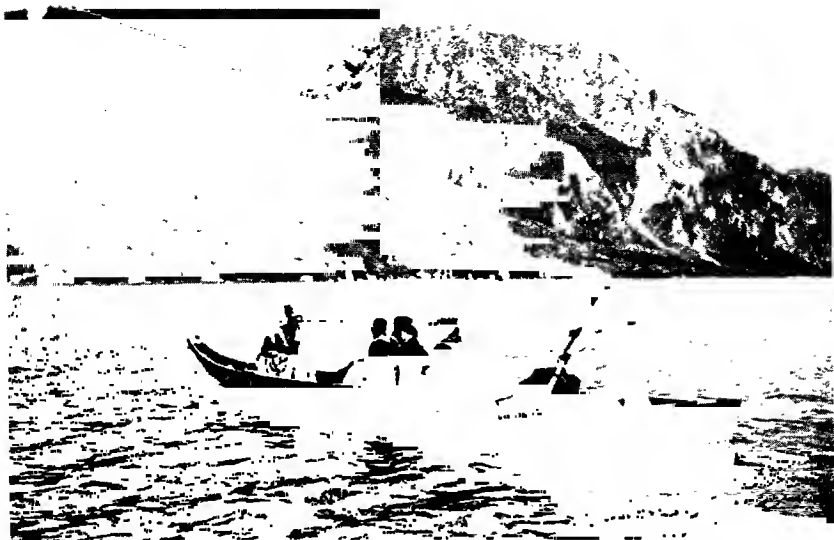


Photo officially supplied by O. V. W.  
*The Ferris Wheel in the Prater at Vienna.*



*A picturesquely attired party on one of the several beautiful lakes in Austria.*

*A glimpse of Salzburg, Glockenspiel.*

Both photos officially supplied by O. V. W.



for hand luggage carried inside the cab. Customary tip : 10 to 20 per cent.

Examples :

	1 to 3 passengers.	More than 3 passengers or night tariff.
From Operto to Kobenzl ..	\$ 5.50	\$ 6.75
„ „ „ Schonbrunn ..	\$ 3.25	\$ 4.

### GRATUITIES.

Most of the hotels in Vienna, if the guest so desires, add the tips to the bill on a percentage basis. For a stay of less than 3 days 15 per cent. is the rule, for one of longer duration 10 per cent.

### COFFEE-HOUSES AND RESTAURANT.

Cost of a breakfast :

Modest .. ..	\$ —.80 to 1.50
Medium .. ..	\$ 1.— „ 2.—
First class ..	\$ 1.50 „ 3.50

Cost of a lunch :

Modest .. ..	\$ 1.30 to 2.—
Medium .. ..	\$ 2.— „ 2.50
First class ..	\$ 2.50 „ 7.—

Cost of a dinner :

Modest .. ..	\$ 1.30 to 2.—
Medium .. ..	\$ 1.50 „ 3.50
First class ..	\$ 2.50 „ 10—

### TOURIST LITERATURE.

*Time-Tables* :—Official Austrian Pocket Time-Tables (published semi-annually).—Official Austrian Time-Tables (published semi-annually).—“Austria-Verkehr,” published by the Austrian Traffic Bureau two to three times a year.—“Wimmer’s Time-Tables,” large edition (published semi-annually).

*Guides through Vienna* :—Baedeker (Austria)—Baldass—Grieben (Vienna and Surroundings)—Leixner—Mayer—Worl.

*Guides through Vienna's Environs* :—Frank's "Guide through the Surroundings of Vienna." Forster-Ronninger's "Tourist Guide for Lower Austria." "Austrian Folding Boat Guide" (published by Artaria).

*Maps and Plans* :—Vienna : G. Freytag & Berndt's General and Special Maps.—The Cartographic Institute's General and Special Plans.—M. Stern's "Vienna in Book Form". Lower Austria : Freytag & Berndt's Tourist Excursion Maps, Vienna Excursion Maps and Skiing Maps.

### POINTS OF INTEREST, VIENNA.

*Theatres* :—Opera, Burgtheater, Academy Theatre, Deutsches Volkstheater, Theater in der Josefstadt, Theater an der Wien, Scala, Kammerspiele, Volksoper, Raimundtheater, Die Komodie, Bürgertheater, Vienna Stadttheater.

*Museums* :—Historical Museum of the City of Vienna, Art Historical Museum (State Art Gallery), Armoury, Secular and Clerical Treasuries, Austrian Gallery (Baroque Museum, Gallery of the 19th Century, Modern Gallery), Collections of the Academy of Fine Arts, Cathedral and Diocesan Museum, Archive and Museum of the Society of Friends of Music, National Library, State Archives, Army Museum, the "Albertino" Graphic Collections, Imperial Palace (Hofburg), Schonbrunn Palace, Capuchin Vault, Museum of National History, Schonbrunn Zoo, Aquarium of the Biological Experimental Station, Ethnological Museum, Haydn Museum of the City of Vienna, Roman Museum of the City of Vienna, Schubert Museum of the City of Vienna, Memorial Room of the Wertheimstein Villa, Museum of Clocks and Watches, Museum of the Federal Theatres, Lower Austrian Provincial Museum, Technical Museum, Prince Liechtenstein Art Gallery, Czernin Gallery, Harrach Gallery, Austrian Museum for Art and Industry, Court Plate and Silver Chamber, Folklore Museum, Museum for Anatomical Wax Preparations, Anatomical Museum, Police Museum, Jewish Museum, Museum



for Work among the Blind, Hermes Villa in the Lainzer Deer Park, University and Urania Observatories. Tickets, valid for one week, for any number of visits to museums and other points of interest may be obtained for Three Schillings.

### SIGHTSEEING SUGGESTIONS FOR TEN DAYS.

*First day.—Morning :* First walk through the central part of the City, Museum of the City of Vienna in the Rathaus. *Afternoon :* Schonbrunn (Park, Palace, Zoo and Palm House). *Evening :* Theatre or Concert.

*Second day.—Morning :* National Art Gallery. *Afternoon (up to 4 p.m.) :* Austrian Gallery. A drive on the Vienna Mountain Road (Kobenzl, Kahlenberg and Leopoldsb-berg, tea and dinner at the former two, respectively). Return by way of Grinzing (Heuriger).

*Third day.—Morning :* Visit to an Art Exhibition or the Austrian Museum, followed by shopping. *Afternoon :* Modling—Hinterbruhl, Castle Liechtenstein. *Evening :* Theatre or Concert (Coffee House).

*Fourth day.—Morning :* Second walk through the central part of the City (churches and palaces), Armoury and Ethno-logical Museum (New Hofburg). *Afternoon :* A visit to the Prater and the Stadium Baths. *Evening :* At one of the many Prater resorts.

*Fifth day.—A visit to the Rax and the Semmering.*

*Sixth day.—Morning :* Wienerwald (Motor-bus Hüttel-dorf—Heiligenkreuz—Baden). *Afternoon :* Baden (Casino, Baths and Kurpark).

*Seventh day.—A visit to the Wachau. In winter :* Ski-ing excursion to the Wienerwald or the Schneeberg, or a visit to the Austrian Museum and the Army Museum, to be followed by *afternoon* tea and dancing.

*Eighth day.—Morning :* Schubert Museum, to be followed by shopping (see next paragraph). *Afternoon :* Laxenburg. *Evening :* Theatre or Consort (Coffee House).

*Ninth day.—Morning :* Klosterneuburg (Abbey, and possibly bathing). *Afternoon :* From Klosterneuburg by motor-bus to Weidling—Weidlingbach—Steinriegel—Sophienalpe—Neuwaldegg. *Evening :* Theatre or Concert (Coffee House).

*Tenth day.—Morning :* Central Cemetery (Graves of famous men). *Afternoon :* Castle Kreuzenstein. *Evening :* Theatre or Concert (Coffee House).

### SHOPPING EXCURSION THROUGH THE PRINCIPAL STREETS.

Hofburg (Michaelerplatz)—Kohpmarkt—Graben—Kärntnerstrasse—Opernring—Bobenbergerstrasse—Mariahilferstrasse. Return by motor-bus or tram 58 or 59 to Neuer Markt—Spiegelgasse—Graben—Tuchlauben—Hoher Markt—Rotenturmstrasse—Stephansplatz.

### FOREIGN CURRENCY REGULATIONS.

Austrian and foreign money may be introduced into Austria without restriction. The re-export of Austrian money is limited to 200 Schillings and of foreign currencies up to the equivalent of 500 Schillings. Larger amounts may be re-exported only within a period of two months and provided their import was properly attested in the tourist's passport upon his entry into Austria. In the absence of such attestation amounts exceeding the regular quota may be exported only by special permit of the Austrian National Bank. Such permit will in no instance be issued for amounts of Austrian money exceeding 2000 Schillings. The import and export of letters of credit and traveller cheques is unrestricted.

**SIGHT-SEEING TOURS THROUGH VIENNA.**—Starting place : Opera or Liebenberg Monument, Trips on the Danube, Moonlight Excursions, starting at Marien Bridge or Augarten Bridge (see special announcements for summer events).

**GUIDES.**—Licensed Male and Female Guides supplied by

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Small portion of Messrs. Thos. Cook & Son's map of Central and Southern Europe, with acknowledgment.